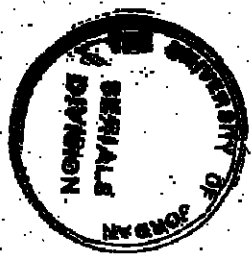


Mideast electricity grid approved

DAMASCUS (R) — Jordan, Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Egypt Sunday approved an ambitious plan to link their electricity networks by 1997. The first stage of the project, costing \$185 million, will be financed by the Kuwait-based Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, whose Director General Abdullah Al-Hamad attended the two-day Damascus talks. The project was first endorsed by the five states in 1989. Turkey's Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Ersin Faryali, said on Sunday the linked grid would serve 150 million people. Syrian Electricity Minister Kamil Al-Saba said the project should be a first stage towards connecting the five states with Gulf Arab countries who have a surplus and linking these countries with Europe through Turkey. He said Maghreb Arab countries should be linked with the five through Egypt, and other African states could also join the network.



Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordanian Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة سياسية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرأى

Egyptian, UAE presidents hold talks

ABU DHABI (R) — Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak arrived in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Sunday for talks with UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan on regional issues. It will be the second meeting between the two leaders in less than a month. The Emirates News Agency said Mr. Mubarak stopped in Abu Dhabi for a brief visit on his way to China. The Egyptian leader left Cairo Sunday for a tour which will also take him to North Korea, Russia and Poland to discuss the Middle East peace process. (See page 2) "The visit of Mubarak to the UAE may present itself to be most important... considering what emerged from Sheikh Zayed's last meeting in Cairo," the official UAE newspaper Al Itihad daily said in an editorial Sunday. "That meeting called for increased consultations and galvanising Arab unity which danger in the region made necessary." In Cairo last month the two leaders held three days of talks about a territorial row between Iran and the UAE over the Gulf island of Abu Musa and two other islands. Egypt was one of 20 Arab League states which backed the UAE in its dispute with Iran over the three islands. Mr. Mubarak has also mediated in a border clash between Saudi Arabia and Qatar last week.

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British defence chief arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — British Chief of Defence Field Marshal Sir Richard Vincent arrived here Sunday at the head of a military delegation on a several-day visit to Jordan, during which he will meet with a number of senior Jordanian officials and visit military sites and historical and archaeological places. Sir Vincent, who is accompanied by his wife, was received upon arrival at the airport by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and senior military officials.

FIS members held for shooting, arson

ALGIERS (R) — Algerian security forces have arrested four Muslim fundamentalists who tried to kill a government official, stole explosives and carried out arson attacks, the official news agency APS said Sunday. It said Habib Abdul Malek, 26, a member of the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), shot and wounded the official near the eastern city of Constantine, on Aug. 21. Three accomplices, also FIS members, acted as lookouts and masterminded the attack.

Kuwait to buy American tanks

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait has chosen the U.S. Abrams M1-A2 tank, similar to those which helped the allies win the Gulf war against Iraq, as the main battle tank for its army. The official Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) quoted Defence Minister Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah as saying Sunday that a committee of military experts had chosen the tank because it is "the most responsive to Kuwaiti army requirements." The minister said the Abrams had shown the best performance in desert combat conditions "as proven during the war for the liberation of Kuwait." Sheikh Ali said contacts were under way with the U.S. government to facilitate the purchase of the tanks made by General Dynamics Corporation. KUNA did not say how many tanks Kuwait would buy or give the expected value of the deal. British Challenger tanks competed with U.S. tanks in desert trials this summer for a contract expected to involve 300 to 400 tanks and spare parts worth an estimated \$14 billion.

7 killed in Kurdish violence in Turkey

ANKARA (R) — Seven people including a 10-year-old girl have been killed in the latest Kurdish-related violence in southeastern Turkey, officials said Sunday. Six rebels of the separatist Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) died in three separate clashes, security officials said. Guerrillas fired rockets into Belenoluk village in Siirt province Saturday night, killing 10-year-old Bisenk Basak and wounding her parents, the Anatolian news agency said. Three of the dead rebels were killed early Sunday by troops pursuing them after they abducted four people from a convoy of cars held up on a highway in Bitlis province late on Saturday. Officials said the fate of the four kidnapped travellers was not known. Two others rebels were killed in a clash near Kozluk town in Batman province and a third died in Erzurum province after a gunfight with troops.

Algeria, Italy sign \$8b gas accord

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria Sunday signed a 20-year contract valued at around \$8 billion at current prices to sell natural gas to Italy. Under the agreement, Algeria's state oil and gas company Sonatrach will deliver four billion cubic metres of gas a year to the Italian state electricity firm, ENEL. ENEL President Franco Viezzoli said at a signing ceremony in Algiers after two years of negotiations: "We are interested in opening negotiations, from today if necessary, to double this quantity." Delivery is due to start late in 1994 through the Transmed pipeline, running from Algeria through Tunisia and under the Mediterranean to Italy. Work is already underway to increase the pipeline capacity from an existing 16 billion cubic metres to 24 billion a year by 1994.

Violent protests rage in occupied lands; Israel says detainees end strike

Combined agency dispatches

VIOLENT CLASHES continued in the occupied territories Sunday as Palestinians pressed ahead with demonstrations in support of Palestinian prisoners on hunger-strike in Israeli jails. The occupation authorities said late Sunday that the prisoners had agreed to end the hunger-strike, but there was no immediate confirmation of the agreement from Palestinians.

The Israeli army rushed reinforcements into the occupied territories to quell violent protests which left a Palestinian teenager dead and 36 others wounded in clashes with troops.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, a Jewish settler was killed by an Arab who struck the man with a hoe, the army said.

The settler was attacked as he repaired a computerised irrigation system in a hothouse at Ganne Tal, two kilometres from Khan Yunis, the army said.

Troops erected roadblocks and searched the area for suspects, the army said. The motive was not immediately known. "The slaying came on the third day of clashes in the past week between troops and Palestinians demonstrating in solidarity with Palestinian prisoners on hunger-strike since Sept. 27 to demand better conditions."

Later Sunday, Police Minister Moshe Shahal announced that hunger-strikers informed him they had agreed to end the strike, said his spokesman Rafi Levy.

He did not give further details, but Israel Radio said a deal was struck after police and prison authority officials agreed to look into the inmates' demands starting Tuesday.

Palestinian leaders could not immediately confirm the report. Earlier the army took the unusual step of opening its main West Bank prison to the media, seeking to counter the hunger-strike.

Hours after Israeli, Arab and foreign journalists visited the central prison near Nablus, the police ministry announced that the inmates had called off their strike, 15 days after it began.

Ministry spokesman Rafi Levy added that the deal was reached after Police Minister Shahal and prison authority officials agreed to investigate the inmates' demands, "with particular emphasis on the humanitarian ones," starting Tuesday.

He stressed the prisoners were promised better conditions as long as improvement does not harm "security." All prisoners began eating again after the deal was announced, Mr. Levy added. During the prison visit, journalists were allowed to interview

fasting inmates at random, out of earshot of the warden, and were briefed in four languages by senior prison officials.

The media event reflected the government's concern that the hunger-strike that began Sept. 27 was leading to increasingly bloody confrontations between troops and Palestinians and could disrupt the U.S.-sponsored peace talks resuming later this month.

At least three Palestinians have been killed and more than 100 wounded by troops during weekend incidents in the occupied territories that grew from rallies supporting the hunger-strike.

Thus the government was eager to settle the strike and prove to the inmates' families that conditions are not bad enough to warrant street protests.

The strike began at central prison, an 850-inmate lockup on a mountainside outside Nablus, and spread to other prisons.

After a two-day halt for negotiations between prisoners' representatives and Mr. Shahal, the fast resumed last Thursday in the Nablus prison and seven others.

Inmates told reporters their strike was entirely over conditions in central prison and other

(Continued on page 5)

Women stage solidarity protest in Amman, page 3

U.N. team to demand further details of Iraq's Scud missiles

BAHRAIN (Agencies) — The leader of the largest U.N. weapons inspection team to visit Iraq Sunday said his mission will focus on up to 200 Scud missiles that intelligence sources believe may still be hidden.

Nikita Smidovich, a Russian, said the inspection was not related to the Nov. 3 U.S. presidential election.

Iraq tried to delay the team's two-week mission, to start Friday, saying it is wary of a U.S.-engineered attempt to provoke a confrontation to help President George Bush.

Upon arrival at the team's regional headquarters in Bahrain, Mr. Smidovich said:

"This inspection was planned long, long ago. So we don't see any operational reason for it to be postponed, and of course we're not influenced by political events outside the mandate of the Security Council."

Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the U.N. special commission in

charge of the inspectors, had already rejected Baghdad's request. He said it was not within his mandate to take political issues into consideration.

Mr. Smidovich said his 50-member team, which includes nuclear, chemical and biological weapons experts, planned surprise visits to sites previously undeclared by Iraq.

And he affirmed the right of the team to enter any building — government ministries or even presidential palaces — if there was a need to do so.

Mr. Smidovich's team will be the 45th sent in by the commission to implement the council's Gulf war ceasefire Resolution 687, which demands elimination of Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programmes and long-range ballistic missiles.

Freed American bomb-disposal expert Chad Hall arrived in Kuwait Sunday.

Mr. Hall, hired to clear ordnance left over from the 1991 Gulf

war, was arrested by two Iraqi policemen Thursday one kilometre on the U.N.-designated Kuwaiti side of the border.

Iraq, tacitly admitting it had made a mistake, released him to the U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) Saturday.

Under Iraqi law, anyone entering the country without a visa can be jailed for up to 20 years and several foreigners have been convicted after being arrested near the country's borders.

The Swedish Foreign Ministry said Sunday Iraq had said it would reconsider the cases of three Swedes jailed for illegally entering the country.

Ministry spokeswoman Ingrid Iremark said Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Saeed Al Sabah made the pledge to a Swedish envoy in Baghdad Saturday (see page 2).

There was no immediate news

(Continued on page 5)

Security court begins trial of Islamic Jihad splinter group

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A case against a Palestinian Muslim fundamentalist leader has gone to the State Security Court, in the second case involving an illegal armed group to be tried in Jordan in the last three months.

Ibrahim Mohammad Abdul Rahman Sirbel, 64, was formally charged Saturday with affiliation with and collecting funds for an illegal group, and unlicensed possession of explosives and weapons.

Legal sources said the case against Mr. Sirbel, a native of Hebron the occupied West Bank, was not related to the ongoing trial of another illegal group, Shabab Al Nafeer Al Islami.

Lower House of Parliament members Laith Shbeilat and Yacoub Qarash are the first and second defendants in the Al Nafeer case, with two Jabal Hussein shopkeepers as the

third and fourth. The trial resumes Monday after a six-day recess.

The charge-sheet against Mr. Sirbel, filed by prosecutor Captain Hassan Tarawneh, said the accused was affiliated with an illegal group known as "Islamic Jihad — Al Aqsa Battalions."

The group, according to the indictment, was set up in 1990 by Mr. Sirbel after splitting from the Islamic Jihad group, which was established in the early 1980s in the occupied territories. The other faction is headed by Sheikh As'ad Bayoud Al Tamini and calls itself "Islamic Jihad — Beit Al Maqdes."

Both groups are known to have ideological and political differences with almost every other Islamic movement in the region, including the Muslim Brotherhood as well as the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, based in the occupied Gaza Strip. The two-page indictment

said that Mr. Sirbel, the lone defendant in the case, collected funds and recruited people into the group, including non-Jordanians.

It identified four non-Jordanian members of the group as Payez Al Azzwad of Sudan, Saleh Abdul 'Al of Algeria, Hussein Al Anbar of Saudi Arabia and Amjad Al Muhanna of Syria (no information was immediately available on the whereabouts of these people).

The indictment did not cite any specific operation carried out by Islamic Jihad — Al Aqsa Battalions, but said that Mr. Sirbel had collected \$85,000 to finance the group's activities, including the purchase of explosives, arms and ammunition, which were seized by the security forces in a raid in August.

Mr. Sirbel, director of a so-called Middle East Cultural Centre in Russeifa, was

(Continued on page 5)



Israeli forces arrest a Palestinian demonstrator in Arab East Jerusalem

Government to compensate farmers who followed ministry regulations

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday visited the Ministry of Agriculture and reaffirmed that the government would compensate farmers whose crops were destroyed because they were irrigated with contaminated water. Farmers who had their crops destroyed because they were grown near the Khirbet Al Samra waste-water treatment plant or along the Zarqa River will be compensated for their losses if they had followed the ministry's instructions to plant only vegetables that can be eaten after cooking, the prime minister said. The prime minister stressed

that the government wants a tomato paste factory planned for Al Mafraq governorate to be constructed as soon as possible. Currently, Jordan has two tomato paste factories; one at Arida and the other at Ghor Safi, both in the Jordan Valley region where most of Jordan's agricultural products are grown.

Speaking on Jordan Television Saturday evening, Minister of Agriculture Fayez Khasawneh reaffirmed that agricultural produce sold in local markets was "safe and fit for human consumption."

He said that the contaminated vegetables which the government

ordered destroyed last month constituted a small percentage of the produce of a limited area of land in the Khirbet Al Samra area near Zarqa.

The minister said that 48 out of 2,000 cultivated dunums were affected. He said that farmers who violated the ministry's instructions and grew vegetables that can be eaten raw in that area would not be compensated.

In his television interview Saturday evening the minister also invited private-sector firms to take the initiative and set up processing plants for different vegetables and fruits other than tomatoes.

Sheikh Saad said declining premiership

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah has declined to form a new cabinet to replace the one that resigned following the election of the country's first post-war parliament, press reports said Sunday.

In what diplomats are calling a rare display of public pique over Al Sabah's infighting, the crown prince, who is also prime minister, said he felt he needed more support for his past efforts.

The Al Qabas independent daily quoted unidentified sources as saying that Sheikh Saad asked the ruling emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, to relieve him of the prime ministry job.

The newspaper, did not give reasons, but pro-government Al Siyassah daily said the crown prince's decision was not final.

especially since the emir himself was working on dissuading him.

"Attempts are underway to convince his highness to change his mind... but he believes that if there is no consensus on him as a person, he would rather not continue," said Al Siyassah, quoting unidentified political observers.

Western diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity, said it appeared to be a public attempt to stop rival factions of the family from sniping at him to get the job themselves.

The diplomats also said they expected Sheikh Saad to retain both jobs, although many voters in the Oct. 5 election campaigned on a platform of splitting the two.

A government official said he could not believe the reports. "The only thing I can believe in is the decree from his highness

the emir," said Amal Al Hamad, assistant under-secretary for international media at the Ministry of Information.

"It (the press reports) is something we cannot believe in unless we see the official statement of the government," she added.

However, she declined to confirm or deny the reports. Since the opposition, which took 35 of 50 seats, was for splitting the job, royal opponents of Sheikh Saad were trying to get that to get the post themselves.

Sheikh Saad's office would not comment on the reports, but the crown prince had complained in a recent televised interview that members of the past parliaments had refused to accept government portfolios. He is believed to be having the same difficulties now.

Arafat to meet Hamas in Sudan

AMMAN (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and leaders of the Muslim fundamentalist movement Hamas will meet in Khartoum next month to try to end inter-Palestinian fighting in the Israeli-occupied territories, Hamas said Sunday.

Jordan-based Hamas representative Mohammad Nazal said he met two members of the Central Committee of Mr. Arafat's mainstream Fatah in Amman Saturday.

"We agreed on a meeting between Arafat and Hamas during the first week of November in Khartoum to discuss the internal fighting in the occupied territories and to try to put an end to it," Mr. Nazal told Reuters.

An agreement reached in August between the main Palestinian factions in the occupied territories to end bloody infighting has had little effect.

"The agreement that was reached last August was not translated into action on the ground. The meeting with Arafat is an attempt to make the agreement work," Mr. Nazal said.

A majority of Jordan-based members of the Palestine National Council (PNC) said Sunday they support continued peace talks with Israel.

A statement by the Palestinian mission in Amman listed 90 PNC members who reaffirmed their support for the Arab-Israeli peace talks backed by the PLO. The members said they considered the negotiating process part of the "national struggle against Israeli occupation."

The group of 90 forms a majority of Jordan-based members of the PNC, which has more than 400 seats.

Mr. Arafat has recently come under criticism from hardline PLO factions which have urged him to suspend Palestinian participation in talks they regard as a sell-out.

(Continued on page 5)

Most Lebanese Christians boycott polls

BEIRUT (R) — Most Christians in Lebanon's Maronite heartland boycotted the final stage Sunday of disputed parliamentary polls that split their community and sparked a national political crisis.

Many residents streamed to churches instead of polling stations. Church bells tolled "to mourn democracy."

Officials reported an 18 per cent turnout in the mountainous Keserwan area north and northeast of Beirut after voting closed at 5 p.m. (1500 GMT).

They said 14,000 out of 78,000 eligible people voted to choose five Maronite Catholic candidates from among 21 hopefuls for the new half-Christian half-Muslim 128-member assembly.

Christians shut down east Beirut and the mountains in the second day of a protest strike. Christian areas looked like a

ghost town with empty streets.

Many people hoisted black coffins and Lebanese flags wrapped with black ribbons in mourning. Some staged sit-ins at churches while others demonstrated shouting slogans denouncing President Elias Hrawi's Syrian-backed government and the polls.

"No to a Syrian appointment of deputies," said one slogan. The historically-dominant Maronite community dismisses the election as a ploy by Syria to tighten its grip on Lebanon and has frequently urged Mr. Hrawi's government to postpone voting.

Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir, the spearhead of the opposition, told Sunday prayers: "We were very much hoping that the people would be allowed to select their representatives freely and without any pressure..."

"Instead and to the contrary, these elections came to be a crossing bridge for implementing plots which will be uncovered with time," he said.

The Christian community coded enshrined influence to Muslims in the 1989 Taif peace accord that helped end the civil war in 1990. Its leaders wanted the polls delayed until Syria's 35,000 troops withdraw from Beirut in line with the pact.

Christian fury increased when most of the winning candidates in the first three rounds of voting in August and September were pro-Syrian Christians and pro-Iranian Muslim fundamentalists.

Christians believe the newly-elected parliament would serve the interest of Syria, which orchestrates Lebanon's security and politics in accordance with a cooperation treaty signed in 1991.

The Keserwan elections were set for August 30 but voting was suspended after all but one candidate withdrew.

Sunday's contest was largely between two main candidate lists both made up of traditional feudal leaders. One was led by Fares Bouez, Mr. Hrawi's son-in-law and another by Rachid Khazen. Mr. Bouez backed the boycott and resigned as foreign minister in August. He has since changed his mind.

"Our main problem is with the Syrian (military) presence... Syrian troops exert a psychological pressure in Lebanon... Syria's influence goes far beyond the new assembly to all levels," opposition spokesman Farouq Abblama told Reuters.

Thousands of tank-led troops and policemen deployed in the mountains and Beirut.

Kurdish leader warns Iran against helping Turkish Kurds

SALAHUDIN, Iraq (AP) — A top Iraqi Kurdish leader has said the week-long fight with separatist Turkish Kurdish rebels was nearly over and warned Iran not to interfere to prolong it.

Jalal Talabani, who heads one of the two main Iraqi Kurdish guerrilla groups, said the Turkish rebels were retreating towards Iran in the Baradust (Khakurk) area. He said the Turkish Kurds were driven Saturday from the last areas bordering Turkey.

"Today or tomorrow the operation will be finished unless the Iranians interfere with their forces," said Mr. Talabani.

Iraqi Kurds mounted an offensive a week ago to oust the guerrillas of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) from sanctuaries inside northern Iraq.

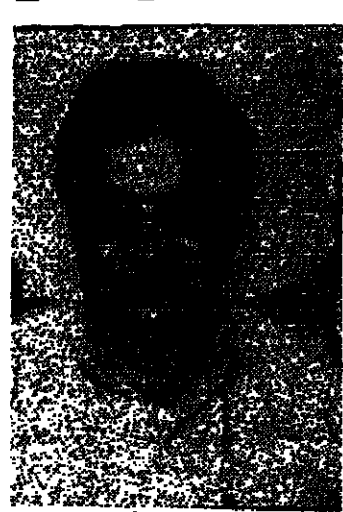
The Iraqi Kurds view the Turkish rebels as a threat to their main supply lines that move through Turkey. They also want good relations with Turkey because the Western warplanes protecting the Iraqi Kurds from the Iraqi military are based in Turkey.

Mr. Talabani said Iranian intervention was a "serious possibility." He said Iran's 67th infantry division and a commando division had moved to the Iraqi border.

He contended Western military officials, whom he met with Saturday, did not rule out Iranian intervention.

"I'd like to warn Iran. If continues to interfere in our internal affairs, if it allows the PKK to use its territory against the regional government of Iraqi Kurdistan, it means that Iran is playing with fire," Mr. Talabani said.

"And when a fire is ignited, it will not remain on only one side



Jalal Talabani

of the border. You will have it on the other side as well," he warned.

"If Iran attacks we'll resist and never surrender," Mr. Talabani said, talking to reporters at this former mountain resort after a meeting with Masoud Barzani, another top Iraqi guerrilla leader, and officials of the Western military mission in northern Iraq.

Mr. Talabani said he expected the Iranians to send in Iranian forces dressed in Kurdish garb to help the PKK.

He said by Saturday the PKK forces controlled only an area extending about 10 kilometres from the Iranian border.

"If Iran opens its borders to the PKK for attacks against Iraqi Kurds, then we will open our borders for the (separatist) Iranian Kurds based in Iraq, whom we were not permitting to carry out operations against Iran," he threatened.

Mr. Talabani said there were

"several thousand" Iranian Kurdish rebels in Iraq.

He said the fear of Iranian intervention stemmed from what he called Tehran's dwindling control over Iraqi Shiite opposition groups based in Iran.

Last month, the Iraqi Shiites formed a united front with the Iraqi Kurds and other opposition groups in an effort to topple Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and set up a democratic and pluralistic Iraq with Western support.

The PKK has been fighting since 1984 for self-rule in southeastern Turkey, where half of the country's 12 million Kurds live. Over 5,000 people have died in the fighting.

Turkish military officials put the PKK strength at 3,500 guerrillas inside Turkey and 4,500 more deployed outside its borders, mostly in northern Iraq.

The PKK has attacked Turkish army posts from sanctuaries in northern Iraq grabbed after the Gulf war. Iraqi Kurds attacked the sanctuaries last Sunday.

Iraqi Kurds contend Iraqi Kurdish civilians have been killed and wounded by punitive strikes by Turkish jets against the Turkish rebels in the area.

"There will be no more attacks against Turkey by the PKK from northern Iraq," Mr. Talabani declared Saturday.

He said Iraqi Kurdish forces would station units in the area to prevent the return of PKK rebels.

In return, he called on Turkey to not allow the PKK to sever the supply line to northern Iraq by halting thousands of trucks crossing the border with food for the Kurds.

The PKK threatened the drivers Friday in an attempt to block the traffic.

Russians seek to keep Afghan border sealed

RYANDZH, Tajikistan (AP) — Dust billows from the ground with each step, and prickly underbrush scrapes at passersby. Walls of barbed wire stretch above, forming the Tajik-Afghan frontier that Russian troops are trying feverishly to keep closed.

"We absolutely have to hold this border," said Lieutenant-Colonel Viktor Abramov, commander of a border post near this town 150 kilometres south of the Tajik capital of Dushanbe. "If we don't, where will it go? How far will it move?"

The question is bearing down on Russia and Central Asia. The Soviet collapse has plunged the impoverished Republic of Tajikistan into civil war and driven thousands of refugees to other republics.

The Tajik violence has increased fears of an Islamic backlash in Central Asia, a vast swath of territory stretching from Turkey to China.

Three years after Soviet troops gave up trying to control Afghanistan, they are coming back to hunt the Russians in Tajikistan, which shares a language and culture with Afghanistan.

Afghans and Tajiks are smuggling thousands of Soviet and Chinese-made weapons into Tajikistan, where they are used in a civil war that is a bloody mix of political and tribal violence.

"During April and May, only Afghans were bringing in the guns. But then in May, the locals started going over to get them," Col. Abramov said.

When Tajik President Rakhman Nabiyev was ousted last month by a coalition of democratic and Islamic groups, smuggling increased. Many weapons allegedly were bought by Mr.

Nabiyev's government to arm his rural supporters. Others went to opponents of the Nabiyev government.

Lt. Col. Valery Kocheno, deputy commander at the Russian border guards' headquarters in Dushanbe, said an estimated 4,000 automatic rifles have been smuggled in since June.

Others put the number as high as 20,000 this year, although border officials would only say the figure was "significant." The Interfax news agency reported Wednesday that in September, more than 70 weapons, 40,000 rounds of ammunition and many hand grenades were seized by customs officials.

The flood of weapons has driven the black market price to about \$105 for a Kalashnikov assault rifle, half the cost in neighbouring Uzbekistan.

The task of keeping out Afghan guns has fallen on the former Soviet border guards, who were formally taken under Russian control under a bilateral treaty in August from the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Russia, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan agreed earlier this year to increase the size of the border forces by 1,200 and a Kyrgyz contingent reportedly has arrived.

The white, red and blue Russian flag flies over Col. Abramov's small base at Ryandzh, near the huge Dzerzhinsky collective farm that sprawls in the subarctic valley north of the Ryandzh River.

The frontier, roughly the width of a four-lane highway, is a canal of plowed dirt, flanked by barbed wire fences and bushes.

FBI probes handling of Iraq loans case

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has begun investigating the Justice Department's handling of a case involving illegal loans to Iraq, as the administration sought to limit fallout from disclosures that, officials provided misleading information to a federal court.

The FBI investigation, which began Saturday, also came as a private dispute between the Justice Department and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) erupted into the open following two days of secret hearings by the Senate Intelligence Committee into why both agencies gave Atlanta Judge Marvin Shoob incorrect information last month.

The review by the FBI and the department's public integrity section was requested by top Justice Department officials Friday night, said spokesman Paul McNulty.

Sen. David Boren, the Oklahoma Democrat who heads the Senate Intelligence Committee, praised the Justice Department's decision and said FBI Director William Sessions had promised to conduct his inquiry "in a totally independent fashion."

Specifically, the review is looking into contacts between the Justice Department and the CIA, which have accused each other behind closed doors of responsibility for misleading the court.

Mr. Boren said agency officials offered on Sept. 18 to make a public statement "saying much more clearly and accurately" what they knew about the \$5.5 billion in illegal loans by the Atlanta branch of the Italian government's Banca Nazionale del Lavoro (BNL).

The statement was supposed to explain a letter given the judge by the Justice Department — with CIA approval — a day earlier. Both agencies concede the Sept. 17 letter, which was made public, was misleading because it implied that the CIA only had public information about the role of BNL's Rome headquarters — whereas both knew that the agency also had secret reports.

Those secret reports were given to the judge, along with the letter, but were not made public. Complicating the dispute between the two agencies is the CIA's announcement last week that it had found a second batch of cables that it had failed to provide to the Justice Department.

Mr. Boren said the CIA told him that the Justice Department "discouraged" it from making the Sept. 18 statement, which would have corrected the one given to Judge Shoob the day before by both agencies.

"We didn't make any effort to pressure CIA," Larry Urgenson, head of the Justice Department's fraud section, said in an interview.

Spokesman McNulty said the CIA did propose a Sept. 18 statement, but the Justice Department refused to sign on because it disagreed with one of its four points. Mr. McNulty said the CIA was free to provide the statement in its own name.

The Justice Department's problem with the proposed CIA statement goes to one of the major underlying issues in the case: Whether the CIA had information showing that the Rome headquarters of BNL knew of the loans to Iraq made by its Atlanta branch in the 1980s. The money, used in part to buy weapons, was partly guaranteed by the U.S.

The proposed CIA statement said secret cables received by the agency from its sources did not "permit the definitive conclusion" that BNL headquarters knew of the Atlanta branch loans, Mr. McNulty said.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Mubarak starts Far Eastern, Russian tour

CAIRO (AP) — President Hosni Mubarak started Sunday a tour of four Asian and European nations aimed at fostering Egyptian political and economic relations with these countries. The Egyptian leader's trip will take him to China, North Korea, Russia and Poland. On his way East, Mubarak was to stop in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for talks with President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan on the UAE's dispute with Iran over ownership of three islands in the Gulf. Mr. Mubarak, who is accompanied by his Foreign Minister Amr Musa and his chief political aide Osama Al Baz, is also expected to discuss the Middle East peace process during his tour. He is scheduled to arrive in Peking on Monday. There, the Egyptian team is expected to sign an agreement for a new loan from China, the official Middle East News Agency (MENA) said. Trade between Egypt and China amounted to \$130 million in 1991, and Cairo is hoping to balance the surplus which has been in Peking's favour, MENA said. During his visit to Russia, Mr. Mubarak will stress regional issues. Moscow is co-sponsoring with Washington the peace talks between Israel and the Arabs. Russia's ambassador to Egypt, Valdimir Poliakov, said Mr. Mubarak's Moscow trip will "strengthen an exchange of views on regional problems, including means to add momentum to the Middle East peace process."

Iraq to reconsider case of Swedes

STOCKHOLM (R) — Iraq has told Sweden it will reconsider the cases of three Swedes jailed for allegedly entering the country, the foreign ministry in Stockholm said Sunday. Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Saeed Al Sabah made the pledge to a Swedish envoy in Baghdad Saturday, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Ingrid Irenmark said. Lars Olof Briloth, a former Swedish ambassador to Iraq who has temporarily returned to Baghdad, repeated Sweden's demand for the release of the three telephone engineers jailed on Sept. 20 for seven years. According to Swedish authorities the three men, Christer Stromgren, Leif Westberg and Stefan Whilborg, were working on a project in northern Kuwait and stayed by accident on Sept. 3 into Iraq, where they were arrested. "The Iraqi minister said there would be a legal review of the three cases," Mr. Irenmark said. "He did not say when that would be or whether it would be a new trial." But Sweden is encouraged by the swift release of American Chad Hall, who returned to Kuwait Sunday after being arrested in the disputed border area between Kuwait and Iraq on Thursday. "I assume that the release of the American will lead to the release of the three Swedes," the Swedish news agency TT quoted Cabinet Secretary Lars-Ake Nilsson as saying.

Islamic ministers to meet in Iran

MANAMA (R) — The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) said Sunday finance ministers of its member states would meet in Iran on Nov. 10 for two days of talks. The Jeddah-based bank said the meeting, the first since it was established in 1975, was at the invitation of the Iranian government. The 45-member IDB was set up to promote trade exchanges between Islamic states. In compliance with Islamic law which bans usury, it does not take interest on the credit extended to its members.

Iraqi daily brands Ozal servant of West

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq Sunday branded Turkish President Turgut Ozal an "obedient servant" of Israel and the West as the speaker of parliament left for Ankara to boost relations with Iraq's northern neighbour. Al Qadisiyah newspaper, the mouthpiece of Baghdad's Defence Ministry, said in an editorial: "Ozal is an obedient servant and an accomplice in the implementation of the U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist scheme aimed at harming Iraq's national unity." The Iraqi News Agency (INA) said National Assembly Speaker Saeid Mehdi Saleh left for Ankara Sunday to promote relations between the two countries. Turkey blocked the flow of Iraqi oil exports shortly after Baghdad's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and provided an airbase for the Western allies protecting Iraqi Kurds in the north. Iraq accuses Turkey of aiding and encouraging the rebel Kurds to defy the central government. "Ozal's open support for the agents in northern Iraq... reflects his opportunistic and irresponsible attitude in dealing with world issues and is considered a flagrant interference in Iraq's internal affairs," Al Qadisiyah said. It said Mr. Ozal's attitude towards Iraq did not reflect the opinion of the "friendly Turkish people or other Turkish parties."

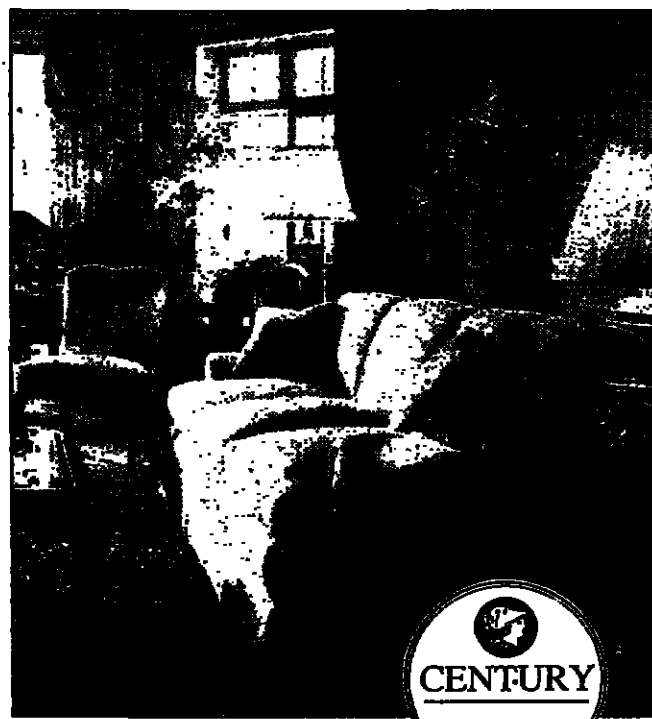
Syrian film wins grand prix

TUNIS (R) — The Syrian film "La Nuit" (Night), directed by Mohammad Mallas, took the Golden Tani Prize at the 26th annual Carthage Film Festival. Mr. Mallas's film recreates the political struggles in mandate Palestine between the two world wars. "I dedicate this prize to those who fought for Palestine and died for their silence," Mr. Mallas said as he received the Tani award, whose shape is the symbol of Roman Carthage. The festival, the main showcase of Afro-Arab cinema, closed Saturday night. The Silver Tani went to "Samba Traore" by Idrissa Oudreago of Burkina Faso, and the bronze to "Yeux Bleus de Yonta" (Blue Eyes of Yonta) from Flora Gomez of Guinea Bissau. Egyptian actor Ahmad Zaki won the best actor award for his role as a shady lawyer who reforms in Atef Tayeb's "Contre le Gouvernement" (Against the Government). Moroccan Souad Ferhat was named best actress for her role in Jelali Ferhat's "La Plage de Enfants Perdus" (Beach of Lost Children). Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's wife Suha made a rare public appearance, telling the audience, "I shall see you very soon at a film festival in Jerusalem."

Iran rebels say Khomelini tomb bombed

NICOSIA (AP) — An exiled Iranian opposition group said Sunday its supporters bombed the Tehran tomb of Iran's revolutionary leader Ayatollah Khomeini causing heavy damage. "Resistance units supporting the Mujahadeen inflicted heavy damage to Khomeini's tomb by setting off three bombs; two went off inside the shrine itself," the Iraq-based Mujahadeen-Khalq said in a statement sent to Reuters in Nicosia. Iran had earlier announced that a percussion bomb planted by "terrorist elements" exploded outside the shrine Saturday. The Iranian news agency (IRNA) said no one was hurt by the blast from a single bomb, planted in a dustbin on the ground of the shrine. The agency quoted as saying several people were arrested.

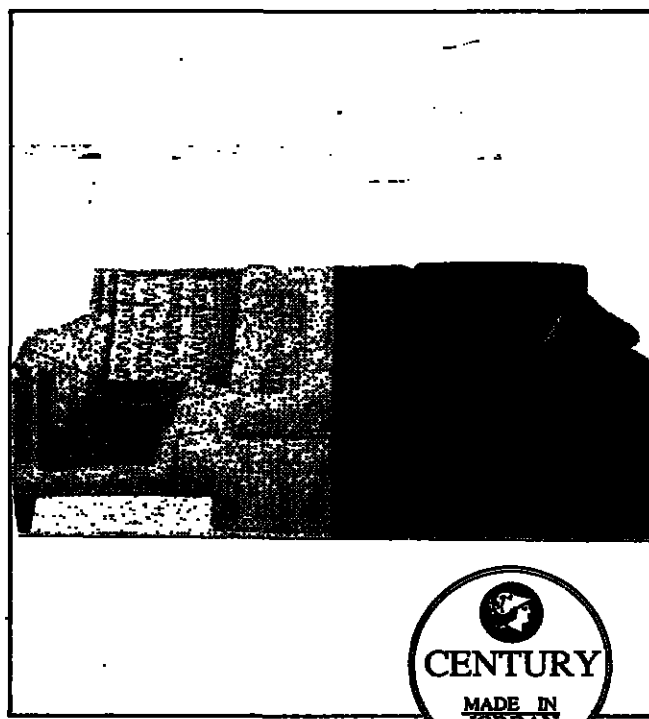
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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

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Tel. 72111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 Cartoon
18:10 Les Chevaliers du Ciel
19:00 News in French
19:15 Weekly Sports Magazine
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 The Power That Be
21:10 Gone to the Dogs
22:00 News in English
22:30 The Gravy Train

PRAYER TIMES

06:14 Fajr
05:31 (Sunrise) Duha
11:23 Dhuhr
14:41 Asr
17:15 Maghreb
18:32 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetish, Tel. 610740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 652826
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assiut International Church Tel. 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 696322
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Slight rise in temperatures will take place and winds will be easterly moderate. In Amman, it will be dusty and winds will be northerly moderate to fresh and sea calm.

Amman 15/20
Aqaba 21/35
Dusair 13/32
Jordan Valley 21/35

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 27, Aqaba 31. Humidity readings: Amman 27 per cent, Aqaba 38 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Farooq Noor 786680
Dr. Zein Zagheer 638591
Dr. Adnan Zagheer 98140
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad 746700
First pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Assema pharmacy 637025
Niswala pharmacy 626072
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Simsimi pharmacy 637660
Niswala pharmacy 626072
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Radwan Al Saad 273877
Al Shura'a pharmacy (273825)

ZARQA:
Dr. Zaid Hawatneh 993267
Rami pharmacy 995119

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637771
Fire Brigade 812226
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 543402
Traffic Police 846390
Public Security Department 60221
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 615615
Electric Power

HOSPITALS

Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200
AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Abdali Maternity, J. Amn 64441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 62352
Mallat, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsi 664174
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845945
Al-Musafir Hospital 6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Itafim, Al-Mubajra 77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775117/26
Army, Marfa 89161/125
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarga Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarga National Hospital (09)900560
Ru Sima Hospital (09)980732
Al-Hana Modern Hospital (09)999999
IRBID:
Princess Beama Hospital (02)272233

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (05)5200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
08:15 Amman (RJ)
08:30 Jeddah (RJ)
08:45 Riyadh (RJ)
09:30 Damascus (RJ)
09:30 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:30 New Delhi (RJ)
10:15 Beirut (RJ)
08:15 Amman (RJ)
08:30 Jeddah (RJ)
08:45 Riyadh (RJ)
09:30 Damascus (RJ)
09:30 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:30 New Delhi (RJ)
10:15 Beirut (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:30 Aden (AL)
09:30 Dubai (EM)
10:15 Khartoum (SU)
12:35 Muscat, Abu Dhabi, Doha (GF)
16:30 Istanbul (TC)
19:00 Paris, Damascus (AF)
19:20 Rome, Beirut (AZ)
19:35 Cairo (MS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:35 Beirut (RJ)
06:35 Amman (RJ)
11:15 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:15 London (RJ)
12:25 Frankfurt (RJ)
12:45 Cairo (RJ)
13:45 Moscow (RJ)
16:30 Doha (RJ)
20:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:30 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

18:30 Aden (AL)
09:15 Beirut (MS)
11:20 Khartoum (SU)

MARKET PRICES

Upward arrow price in fils per kg.
Apple (red) 250/250
Banana 300/450
Banana (Mukammal) 450/400
Beans 120/180
Cabbage 400/350
Carrot 80/40
Cauliflower 250/200
Cucumbers (large) 120/180
Cucumbers (small) 240/180
Eggplant 80/40
Garlic 600/500
Lemon 220/150
Marrow (large) 180/120
Marrow (small) 380/320
Onion (dry) 180/120
Pepper (hot) 150/100
Pepper (sweet) 150/100
Potato 340/250
Tomato 100/50
Fig 300/300
Guava 300/300
Black Grapes 300/250
Green Grapes 350/250
Dates 250/400
Olea 500/500
Parsley 500/500
Sisal 80
Pomegranate 300/250
Spinach 300/250

مكتبة في الجبل

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Qadhafi sends greetings to the King

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday received a telephone call from Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, who congratulated the King on his recovery and safe return home. Colonel Qadhafi wished King Hussein continued good health and happiness and the Jordanian people further progress and prosperity.

King congratulates Spanish monarch

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday sent a congratulatory cable to King Juan Carlos of Spain on the occasion of the Spanish national day. King Hussein wished the Spanish monarch continued good health and happiness and the Spanish people further success and prosperity.

Princess Basma receives British grant

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma received Sunday a grant of \$47,000 from Patrick Eyles, the British ambassador to Jordan, in support of the Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAF). The fund is used to develop training programmes and to enhance the skill capabilities of the core staff of the Zein Al-Sharaf Compound for Development (ZSCD). QAF established ZSCD to act as its specialised arm in developing training programmes for social workers engaged in community development in Jordan and contributing awareness programmes relating to the problems of social development and other related issues. The ZSCD consists of a training centre and district social development centre to provide services to North Hashemite inhabitants and to be used as a laboratory in the training centre. Princess Basma, accompanied by the British ambassador and members of QAF's Board of Trustees, toured the two centres of the ZSCD including the lecture halls, training classes, workshops and the sport facilities. Princess Basma in thanking the British ambassador for his government's support, expressed her confidence in the future of the ZSCD and her hope that relations between QAF and the British government would continue in the future.

Jordan, Russia to hold economic talks

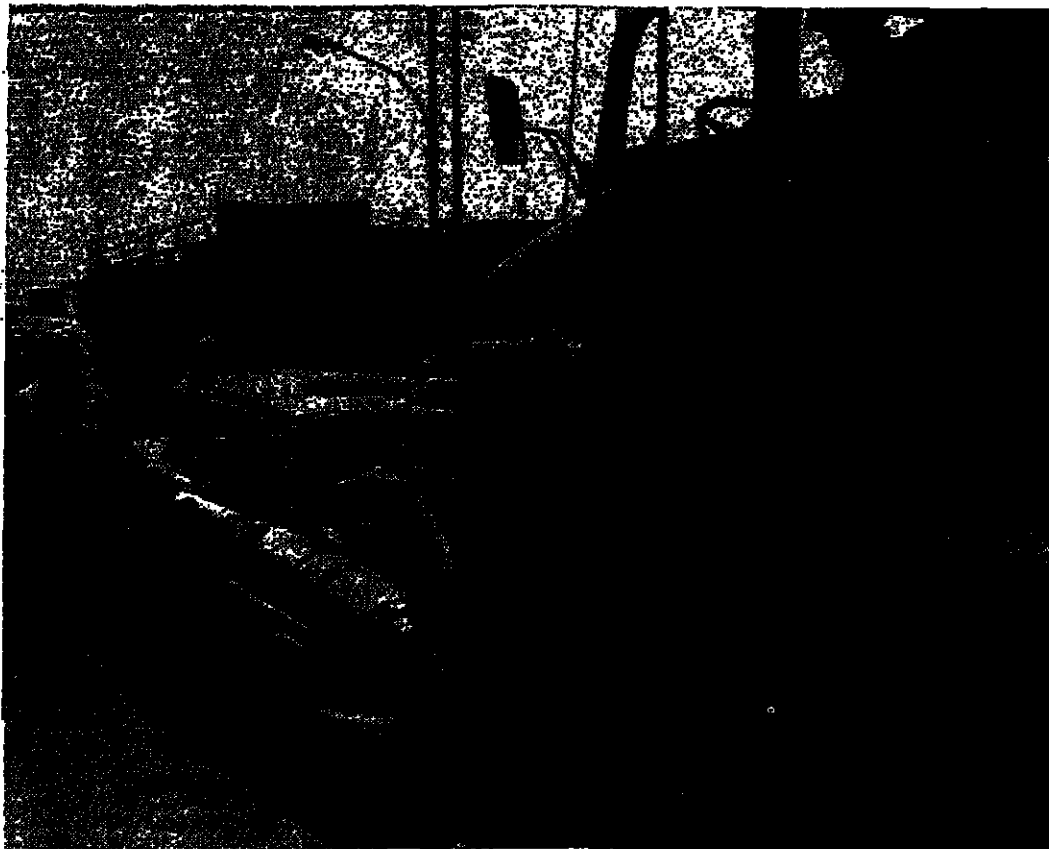
AMMAN (Petra) — Russian Minister of External Economic Relations Peter-Avin arrives here Monday on a two-day visit during which he will hold talks with senior Jordanian officials on means of enhancing commercial and economic relations between Jordan and Russia.

Irbid municipality to raise funds for cancer centre

AMMAN (Petra) — Irbid municipality will host a major festival on Oct. 15 to raise funds for the Al Amal Cancer Centre. Taking part in the festival will be the North Folklore troupe, Irbid municipality and the Jordanian Cooperative Society for Humanitarian Services.

EC delegation concludes successful tour of Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — A 12-member team from the European Community (EC) ended an eight-day visit to Jordan Saturday night having toured projects and organisations partly funded by or through aid from the EC. The group, which included representatives from the European Investment Bank, discussed means of promoting EC-Jordanian cooperation and future aid programmes. Since signing a cooperation agreement in 1977, Jordan has received more than \$250 million in EC aid, of which 60 per cent came in loans and 40 per cent in grants. An EC newsletter issued this month noted that it is possible to see the results of projects supported by the EC throughout Jordan.



A high price to pay: Road accidents last year cost JD 53 million

The car — 'the nightmare'

400 fatal accidents reported in 1991

By Stephanie Genkin

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The number of fatal car accidents in Jordan totalled 344 in 1990 and increased to 400 in 1991. Total injuries in 1990 amounted to over 10,000, and increased by approximately 1,000 the following year, according to the Mohammad Dabbas, president of the Jordanian Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents (JSPRA).

In addition to this, Mr. Dabbas quoted a startling figure of JD 53 million worth of damages resulting from road accidents. The Vice President of JSPRA noted this figure amounts to 2.3 per cent of the nation's GNP, double the percentage of other Third World countries.

At a one-day seminar on "The Car and its Effects on Man and the Environment," Sunday, Mr. Dabbas recommended a more systematic approach to reducing road accidents. He urged ministries working separately on a variety of vehicle safety issues to coordinate their efforts. Current-

ly, there is no cooperation between the various governmental bodies dealing with motor safety concerns, Mr. Dabbas said.

"The dream of owning a car has turned into a nightmare," Dieter Glade, director of the Goethe Institute told the seminar, which was organised by the Jordanian Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents and the Goethe Institute. "Cars are destroying the environment, human beings, and the beauty of the country, especially the villages," he said.

Dr. Glade also pointed out the benefits of unleaded fuel, and the need for larger pedestrian areas and more comprehensive road planning.

During the seminar, several papers were presented, analysing the effects of cars on people and the environment. The papers examined possible strategies for re-

ducing road accidents and the effects of traffic on accidents and pollution. Research papers on the environmental impact of transport systems and policies and new technology to reduce gas emission, were also presented at the meeting.

In addition to the seminar, which was opened by Minister of Interior, Jawdat Shoul, under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, an exhibition called "Nightmare Car" opened Sunday at the Orthodox Club. The exhibition, sponsored by the Jordanian Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents and the Goethe Institute includes photos from Germany, accompanied by texts illustrating the ecological, social, and economic effects of cars. The exhibition will be open to the public until Oct. 16 and is scheduled to re-open at the Al Wihdat Club from Oct. 18-20.

Unemployment expected to rise

AMMAN (J.T.) — Unemployment figures in Jordan are expected to rise from an estimated 14.4 per cent to 15.2 per cent by 1995, according to a study conducted by the Royal Scientific Society (RSS).

Mohammad Amireh, head of the RSS's Centre for International Studies, who supervised the survey, told the Jordan Times that the expected rise in the number of unemployed was mainly due to the increase in population and over 300,000 expatriates who have returned from Kuwait in the wake of the Gulf crisis.

Also graduates from universities and community colleges are finding it increasingly difficult to find work.

The figures presented by the RSS, however, do not tally with those released at the end of 1991 by the Ministry of Labour which

said that 128,000 were registered as unemployed — 18.9 per cent of the labour force in the Kingdom.

The ministry's report said that the unemployment figures rose significantly at the end of the 1980s because of difficult economic conditions such as: The retreat in real terms of gross domestic product between 1986 and 1991, a rise in population, the increasing numbers of non-Jordanian workers, and the return of thousands of expatriates from Kuwait.

Dr. Amireh's survey showed that 32 per cent of the unemployed are military and civilian pensioners, and nearly 74 per cent are totally dependent on their families.

The survey also showed that local workers do not accept the relatively low wages normally paid to non-Jordanians.

Dr. Amireh recommended that

the ways to combat unemployment are: To increase investments, which would create income-generating projects, to check the flow of non-Jordanian workers coming to Jordan, to encourage Jordanians to work abroad, to adopt population strategies that would check the rampant population growth, to set up vocational training courses to cater for the needs of the local labour markets, and finally to spread information among students of universities, schools and community colleges about job opportunities.

The survey was conducted by 55 researchers over three and a half months (ending Nov. 30, 91).

The researchers collected data and information from questionnaires distributed to families with unemployed members in various governorates.

Shipping company boosts profits

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan National Shipping Lines Company (JNSLC) made a total of JD 10.5 million in profits between 1979 and 1991 despite the adverse effects of the Gulf war, according to JNSLC. General Manager Yasser Al Tal. JD 6 million of the profits were distributed to the company's shareholders.

The Aqaba-North European route, which was established in 1980, transported 2 million tonnes of goods to Jordan from Europe between 1980, and 1991 which earned the company an estimated JD 1.646 million in net profits, Mr. Tal said during a visit to the company's offices Sunday by Deputy Prime Minister and Transport Minister Ali Subeimat.

The deputy premier was told that a recent purchase of the company, the tanker Al Azraq, was being used to store crude oil at the port of Aqaba. The ship, which is owned by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and the JNSLC, was used during the Gulf crisis to transport shipments of oil from Yemen to Jordan. Mr. Tal said that the vessel is currently holding 90,000 tonnes of crude oil.

Women groups demand swift action to end plight of Palestinian prisoners

AMMAN (Petra) — Women organisations in Jordan Sunday staged a sit-in in front of the offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to express solidarity with 17,000 Palestinian prisoners, who have been on hunger-strike to protest against their bad conditions in Israeli jails since Sept. 27.

Participants in the sit-in presented a memorandum to the head of the ICRC mission in Amman, calling on all international humanitarian organisations to stop Israel's oppressive measures against Palestinian prisoners.

The memorandum said that Israeli measures contravene all international norms and conventions, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention on the treatment of civilians under occupation.

The organisations also called for the formation of a committee to investigate conditions in Israeli prisons and to force the Israeli occupation authorities to respect and implement international law.

They also urged the release of old and sick prisoners and the

termination of solitary confinement cells. They also called for a halt to repeated Israeli provocations of female Palestinian prisoners, and demanded their transfer to more suitable prisons.

The participants also called for the torture of prisoners under investigation to stop and stressed the need to undertake urgent action to save the lives of detainees who are often threatened with murder.

A participant in the sit-in, Itaf Yousef, highlighted in an interview with Jordan Television the grave conditions in Israeli jails. Ms. Yousef, who spent five years in Israeli prisons, said the Israeli delegation to the Middle East peace negotiations halted talks with the Lebanese delegation, demanding information on a missing Israeli pilot whose plane was downed in Lebanon, while thousands of Palestinian are suffering in Israeli jails.

"We have between 12,000 and 20,000 prisoners of war in Israeli jails, and we should make of this an essential point in the next round of the peace talks," she said.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

Exhibitions

★ Exhibition of paintings and sculptures by artist Nadeem at the French Cultural Centre.

★ National industries exhibition which includes electric appliances, carpets, food supplies, chemical detergents, clothes, paints and other items at Al Hussein Sports Stadium in Irbid.

★ Exhibition of oil and water-colour paintings entitled "Concepts in the Structure of Space" by Dr. George Sayegh at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery — (Open 10 a.m. till 5 p.m.)

★ Art exhibition by Ahmad Nawash at Alfa Art Gallery.

Teleconference

★ Teleconference programme entitled "Breakthrough '92", discussing problems people face in getting access to mental health care and utilizing available information, at the American Centre — 6 p.m.

Presidential debates

★ Videocasts of debates between U.S. presidential candidates George Bush and Bill Clinton at the USIS auditorium, American embassy (11:30 a.m. - 01:00 p.m. and return at 4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.)

Film

★ French film entitled "Les Cavaliers de Luneville" at the French Cultural Centre — 8 p.m.

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Otail Ghanim Haddad, piano
in concert
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Wednesday, 14 October, 1992 - 8:00 p.m.
The Royal Cultural Centre - Main Theatre

Tickets for JD 5 are available at:
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- Rihani Stores, tel. 693775
- Philadelphia Hotel, tel. 663100
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Jordan Times

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Hole close to home

WITH MAN perpetually and habitually preoccupied with tackling problems and troubles on Earth, few people are likely to take time to reflect on the recent revelation that the "ozone hole" over Antarctica has expanded by 15 per cent in 1992 alone. Viewed in proper perspective, the dangers emanating from the continued depletion of the ozone layer in this planet's upper atmosphere dwarf in significance most earthly conflicts, disputes and even wars. Yet the peoples of our planet go on ignoring the gravest of all crises that afflict the countries of the world by lowering the horizon of their sights to issues that matter less in relative terms.

In this context, what is the sense in searching for solutions to our political, economic, social and cultural woes if life per se is being threatened by environmental erosions across the surface and atmosphere of Earth? When, as the case may be here, the size of the ozone hole over Antarctica increases in one year alone from 20 million square kilometres to 23 million square kilometres, then it would not be long before much of this planet will be denied the necessary protection from harmful and harsh ultraviolet rays of the sun. If this trend of ozone depletion continues unchecked, there would be incalculable damage to plant and animal life including human life and on a scale that would make world war conflagrations minuscule in dimension and impact.

What is particularly sad about our reaction to the looming danger is the fact that preventive measures have and can be taken at an acceptable or bearable cost. What is needed to combat the problem is a halt to the deployment of a family of industrial compounds known as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and their substitution by other chemicals. This is not too much to undertake since at stake is life on Earth itself, the quintessential of all human concerns and endeavours.

Here in Jordan, where there is modest manufacturing and industry, we could do our bit by phasing out the use of such chemicals in the manufacture of our infant refrigeration industry. By so doing, the country could provide an example for other states in the region to follow. Developing countries have often resorted to the false argument that since they are "developing" they can be excused from the application of stringent environmental standards. This untenable argument should not be allowed to translate into reckless disregard of the atmosphere of this planet and its life supporting systems. Each country, big or small, must perform its solemn duty to save and protect this planet of ours for succeeding generations from irreversible encroachment. Resolving earthly conflicts alone is rendered meaningless unless mankind pays heed to the overriding concern of protecting the world's environment from top to bottom.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I daily Sunday tackled the situation in the occupied Arab territories in the light of continued Israeli atrocities committed against Palestinian detainees and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's continued hold on the Arab lands occupied since 1967. With the start of the 58th month of the intifada and the lapse of more than two weeks since the start of the hunger strike by Arab detainees in Israeli jails, one can realise that the Israelis are far off from the peace process in word and in practice, said the paper. One can not separate Israel's continued crimes against the people of Palestine from the Israeli intransigent position at the peace negotiations, said the daily. Indeed, one should not pin great hopes on these talks which have achieved nothing for the Arabs and which are scheduled to resume in Washington on Oct. 21, the paper continued. The paper said that today, there is not a single indication that Israel is really inclined towards peace with the Arabs and therefore the Arab parties should wake up to this fact and Arab states should take practical steps to counter Israel's intransigent position. All Israel has done since the start of the peace talks, said the paper, is mislead world public opinion into believing that the Zionist leaders, led by Yitzhak Rabin, are inclined towards achieving peace with their Arab neighbours. The paper said that Israel has never abandoned its terrorist practices against the Palestinian people and has not declared its intention of ever pulling out from Arab lands in implementation of U.N. resolutions.

Sawt Al Shaab daily Sunday described Iraq's release of the American bomb disposal expert Chad Hall as a gesture of goodwill and an indication of Baghdad's orientation towards calming rather than inflaming the situation in the Gulf region. Iraq has proved that it is willing to cooperate with the United Nations, and is preoccupied with the reconstruction process to build its installations, devastated in the war and is busy carrying out vast agricultural and industrial schemes in order to ensure stability and peace in the Gulf, added the daily. But in contrast, the Bush administration is trying hard to inflame the situation and President Bush is trying to win the presidential campaign and retain his seat in the White House at the expense of continued sufferings of the Iraqi people, said the daily. President Bush is trying to exploit the Iraqi people's sufferings and is fuelling disputes among the Arab Gulf states, and exploiting the U.N. inspection teams in Iraq by inciting them to create problems for the Iraqi leadership and a crisis that would bring about the wrath of the Security Council on Iraq, noted the daily. The paper said that President Bush is losing the presidential campaign and is trying to desperately cling onto anything at the expense of the sufferings of innocent people.

Weekly Political Pulse

Two banks, one people and a viable hope for salvation

IN THE course of one week, two weeks ago, two important Palestinian delegations paid a visit to Amman to express their best wishes to His Majesty King Hussein on the occasion of his return to the country in good health. The first group of Palestinians came from the West Bank and Gaza Strip representing middle class Palestinians. The second Palestinian delegation came to Jordan on behalf of Arab-Israelis. The two groups did not come just to express their joy after the King's successful surgery and homecoming, they also had another business on their minds, mostly political. The combined events thus go a long way to illustrate the growing role of the Kingdom in the shaping of the settlement of the Palestinian conflict in the future.

Ever since the peace process started accelerating its pace and the prospects of achieving peace in the Middle East grew stronger, Jordan became a mecca for Palestinians of different political leanings who obviously wish to cement a solid Jordanian-Palestinian relation should the ongoing peace talks come to fruition. The long-standing historical relations between the two Arab peoples, not to mention the familial, economic and cultural ones, are reasserting their impact at a critical stage in the search for a final resolution to the Palestinian case on the basis of international legitimacy. No doubt Jordan is viewed more than ever as an oasis of stability and progress with which the Palestinian people, whether from the occupied territories or from within Israel itself, seek to be associated. This sentiment has been

reinforced by the country's perpetual willingness to extend all kinds of assistance and cooperation to the fledgling Palestinian assertion of national identity and their quest for the exercise of the right of self-determination on their soil within the confines of its principled and well-known position.

This yearning for continued special Palestinian-Jordanian relations carries therefore much meaning and symbolism about the hopes and aspirations of the Palestinians for the revitalisation of the fraternal relations between them and the Jordanian people. The spontaneous but well-chosen words of their spokesmen over the past few weeks especially convey the deep emotions that Jordanians will naturally appreciate and welcome. For whatever the future holds for this part of the world, the Jordanians will continue to be the closest brothers to the Palestinians. This has been borne out by history. For starters, the Hashemite Kingdom came to the rescue of the Palestinians at the onset of the Palestinian conflict and salvaged what could have been salvaged and remained a steady and dependable ally of the Palestinian cause throughout the past decades. No wonder the leaders of the Palestinian people feel the way they do towards Jordan. No wonder also why Jordanians continue to extend support to and express solidarity with the Palestinians.

Against this backdrop, it was no ordinary statement when former Governor of Jerusalem Anwar al Khatib described the Monarch as the King of the two banks. Obviously Mr. Khatib's

assessment of King Hussein came not only from the bottom of his heart but also from the hearts of many like-minded Palestinians. What in effect the former governor was saying was that middle class Palestinians, in particular, yearn for closer relations with Jordan because they sense there is a growing vacuum in the area and, what is worse, increased instability and indecision on the Palestinian side.

With the Palestinian house divided more than ever and to the extent that armed conflicts erupted between them on so many occasions, the rank and file Palestinians under occupation are getting tired of the creeping chaos in their ranks and seek an alternative route that may offer them some elements of coherence as well as a viable hope for salvation.

There is no sign yet that King Hussein accepts the challenge put before him by the various Palestinian emissaries. The Monarch knows more than anybody else that this Palestinian invitation is in essence a two-edged sword and needs to be handled with optimum prudence. One therefore cannot expect a precipitous response from Jordan to the numerous Palestinian overtures for more organic links between the two banks. The only viable approach to the demand by Palestinians for a more active Jordanian participation in their lot is perhaps a "wait and see" perspective that may turn one way or another depending on future developments.

Catch-22 or a fragmented democracy

By Yasser Alwan

THE question to ask in so many parts of the world today is also the one being most deliberately overlooked. In the Arab World this issue is so fraught with embarrassment and self-righteousness, and so tangled in tradition that it has probably become one of the most potent antiquities of our culture. Its most recent construct is the following: Is it ethical or even possible to have a partial or fragmented democracy? Can we have democracy in economics and public life, and not in sexuality and domestic life? Or to put it more directly: Can we have democracy for men and not for women? (The relationship between economics and sexuality, and, therefore, sexuality and democracy [all politics really] is not difficult to fathom. It is remarkably sophisticated, especially in capitalist and market-oriented societies where it is part and parcel of one of the most fundamental acts of these systems — consumption.)

Women have the right to vote and hold elected public office in most Arab countries. Yet while many exercise their prerogative to vote, few attempt to run for public office, and almost none are ever elected. Why is the number of women parliamentarians and ministers in these Arab, struggling-to-be democracies negligible? What reasons can be found for their prevention or abstention from participating in

the political power structures and decision-making processes of the Arab World?

For example, the Jordanian Constitution embraces the principle of equality between the sexes. But does Jordanian society? Laws on the books mandate the standard of equal pay for equal work, it is true, but these laws are not enough. In fact, this kind of legislation — while promoting the ethics of equality in some ideal, two-dimensional world — loses its force of meaning in the real world. Isn't it strange, for instance, that so many women work in the government bureaucracy — which in fact encourages — but so few reach its highest levels? Do the assumptions and underlying attitudes of the administrative system prevent women from reaching top positions? So while the constitution and legislation permit women to hold public office, in and of themselves, such documents have proved to be empty prescriptions because neither they nor our society encourage women to pursue such endeavours. In other words, there is a certain disjunction, perhaps incompatibility, between our professed ideals and tradition (the historical reasons for this are at the very root of the foundation of the Arab state system).

If tradition lags far behind legislation as I suggest, then politicians cannot merely point to these laws, claim to have done

their job, and wash their hands of the matter. They cannot absolve themselves of seeing to it that these laws are everywhere equally applied. Furthermore, as leaders, role-models, and shapers of public opinion, Jordan's politicians must embody these principles in their own behaviour instead of repeating, yet one more time, the pat response that Islam has given a privileged place to women since the seventh century. For example, the norm of feminine behaviour — reinforced, ad infinitum by school curricula, pictures, texts, films, songs, etc. — still endorses the traditional view of women as domestic, dependent, submissive. The better part of our cultural artefacts enforces the ideology that women serve society best as mothers and wives, while men are the breadwinners, the heads of households. Moreover, women who choose to pursue a career have to manage the double burden of professional responsibilities and "domestic" duties, for Arab societies still find it difficult to conceive of, let alone accept, a woman living alone.

It is, however, unfair to hold politicians alone responsible for this sad state of affairs, for no single group of society can be exonerated. For instance, Arab families are able to regulate the behaviour of their daughters and sons through convincing socialisation that subconsciously asserts

that the seat of personhood is not the individual but his or her family. In this way, families pass on social expectations — that marriage is the only possible or respectable outlet for women and men, for example — to their children. Perhaps this is a generously offered form of family protection, for society discriminates against single and divorced women and single men, who must constantly be prepared to defend themselves against the sexual crimes they are about to commit. This is a chicken and egg issue for many Arab families (even those which might, in principle, agree with this analysis) because they are usually not prepared to risk their honour and social status even at the expense of a daughter or son. They all fear the social binoculars trained in on them because gossip is a tremendous form of social control. Few if any families are willing to risk Big Brother's wagging mouth. These hidden eyes have penetrated so far into at least some families lives, that I know of situations when it has prevented parents from speaking honestly to their children.

Inevitably, there will be those who point an accusing finger at the West as evidence of the abominations to come once traditions are questioned or relaxed. And it is true that the West is obsessed with sex and sexuality far beyond the requirements of its economic

system. However, Arabs are equally obsessed with sex, but in quite a different way. We are obsessed with denying or condemning its existence. Yet this discourse only veils this reality; it neither alters it nor makes it disappear for our pious denial leads to various other vicarious and unmentionable means of venting our frustrations.

Every discourse — be it tradition or democracy — recreates the world and fashions it according to its priorities and ends. That is precisely the function, the raison d'être of ideology, which justifies and legitimates the domination of one human being over another. When successful, this discourse structures the relationship of dependence in such a way that any attempt by the dominated element to reestablish parity is perceived as subversion. In a democratic society, it is our responsibility to examine such discourse or tradition, instead of continuing to hide behind its skirts.

By the same token, democracy cannot remain a principle, floating in the air, behind which we hide and justify our behaviour when it is convenient. Democracy is not merely the giftwrap of our constitution and legislation; it is an attitude, a responsibility, a state of mind. Democracy in principle is no democracy at all. So, can countries claiming to be on the path towards democracy pro-

hibit an effective struggle against relations of inequality, in any arena?

So far, all of us have failed to genuinely encourage women to enter Arab political culture at its highest levels. Our societies still play a game of mirrors and reflections between politics, sexuality and tradition. Unfortunately, we have not yet come to understand that women politicians (not male clones like Mr. Margaret Thatcher and her sidekick Ronald Reagan) are indispensable if our societies are to honestly solve all the problems that lie ahead.

We are all hostages of our history, but let us not be victims of it as well. We must recognise that women in the Arab World are caught in a cultural-political catch-22, somewhere between democracy and tradition. And so are all our societies. For if we begin to exclude, one way or another, certain groups of society from the democratic process, who knows where it will lead and what kind of "democracy" it will engender.

The writer, a graduate from Georgetown University's Centre for Contemporary Arab Studies, holds a Master's degree in history. He was a Thomas J. Watson fellow in Egypt, Jordan and Sudan in 1986-1987. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

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Security court begins new trial

(Continued from page 1) — arrested Aug. 25 after security forces uncovered a cache of weapons, explosives, documents, brochures, and videotapes linking him with Islamic Jihad — Al Aqsa Battalions, said the indictment, a copy of which was obtained by the Jordan Times.

It said Mr. Sirbel had confessed to the prosecutor during investigations, and sources said he repeated his confession during Saturday's session of the State Security Court at Marjeh.

The first count carries a maximum penalty of six months; the second charge — illegal possession of unlicensed explosives — carries a minimum of 15 years in jail while the third — illegal possession of arms and ammunition — carries three years. Details of possible sentences for the fourth count — collecting funds for an illegal organisation — were not immediately known.

The charge-sheet provided only a brief outline of the case, apart from saying that Mr. Sirbel, after the Islamic Jihad fallout in 1990, "engaged in organisational activi-

ties and holding conferences acting as the official spokesman of the group — Islamic Jihad — Al Aqsa Battalions."

The court document said Mr. Sirbel had stashed part of the explosives, arms and ammunition he purchased with the funds — "\$85,000 collected from various sources" — at his residence at Hittin refugee camp in Russeifa.

The cache included four Kalashnikov machine-guns and spare parts, 700 bullets, a Sten machine-gun, six different types of handguns, wire-cutting equipment, electric testing equipment, flash guns and alarm clocks in addition to brochures and videotapes, it said adding that Mr. Sirbel confessed to possessing the haul.

The State Security Court will hear the first witness, an officer in the General Intelligence Department (GID), Saturday. In addition to the officer's testimony, evidence cited by the prosecution in the indictment includes Mr. Sirbel's own statement to the prosecutor and the seized explosives, arms and ammunition and documents.

Palestinians continue violent protests

(Continued from page 1)

lockups, where they believe the regime is much harsher.

They demanded free movement among cell blocks, better food, more family visits, less crowding, better medical care and fewer searches. They said one reason they want a say in where inmates are housed was to make family visits easier.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin stepped into the turmoil of the Gaza Strip Sunday and vowed to crush mass Palestinian protests.

"The Israeli army orders are to act with all that is possible within the law to prevent the disturbances, whether by curfews, closures or military activities," he told Israel Radio.

"And we won't let the disturbances continue," said Mr. Rabin, who was defence minister when the revolt against Israeli occupation began in December 1987. The vow by Mr. Rabin, who is

both prime minister and defence minister, echoed his order early in the revolt to use "might, force and beatings."

His unexpected visit, confirmed by defence officials, took place as residents of Gaza's Nuseirat refugee camp said a 14-year-old boy was shot dead by Israeli troops. More than 40 Palestinians were wounded, one critically.

Demonstrators in the camp of 32,000 refugees had ignored an army curfew imposed on most of the Gaza Strip's 750,000 residents to curb the demonstrations.

Mr. Rabin blamed the unrest — described by Gaza residents as the most sustained since early in the revolt — both on Palestinian frustration at the slow pace of peace talks and on those opposed to the current peace process.

"I hope the Palestinians will arrive more sober to the next round of talks," Mr. Rabin said. "For our part, we will continue with the peace process and on the

other hand we will use all our strength to prevent disturbances."

Israel radio reported one clash in the West Bank Sunday.

Israeli officials, fearing a repeat of the bloody unrest that drew world attention early in the revolt, acknowledged organisers of demonstrations had found a potent rallying call in their demand for better prison conditions.

On Saturday, Israeli troops shot dead one Palestinian and wounded 62 in clashes that spread from Gaza to Jerusalem and the West Bank. At least 90 Palestinians were shot dead in the Gaza Strip Wednesday.

Israeli officials, while blaming Palestinians such as the Muslim fundamentalists of Hamas who oppose Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, said they had found a unifying issue.

"Most of the families have somebody who was in prison or is in prison and they are trying to sabotage the peace process by using this issue as a pretext to do so," Police Minister Shahal told Israel Radio.

Arafat to meet Hamas in Sudan

(Continued from page 1)

Arafat met in Amman on Wednesday with George Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, to try to defuse increasingly vocal opposition to the talks due to resume in Washington this month.

The PFLP and the DFLP called on Saturday for Mr. Arafat to postpone a meeting of the PNC's steering committee, the Palestine Central Council, scheduled for Thursday in Tunis to discuss the negotiations.

The two recently joined with Hamas to try to foil the talks. In another development, a top PLO official said in Tunis Mr. Arafat had postponed a visit to Syria.

"The visit to Syria is postponed," PLO Executive Committee member Yasser Abed Rabbo told Reuters in Tunis.

He gave no reason for the postponement, but said the foreign ministers of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt as well as a PLO official would meet in Am-

man on Oct. 17 to coordinate their positions ahead of an upcoming round of peace talks with Israel.

The talks, between Israel and the Palestinians, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon, are due to resume in Washington Oct. 21.

Mr. Arafat returned to his headquarters in Tunis Saturday night after a five-day visit to Jordan.

A PLO official in Jordan said the visit to Syria was postponed on Saturday because Mr. Arafat was unable to get an appointment with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad.

Jordanian officials had said Saturday that Mr. Arafat was about to leave for Damascus but he left several hours later for a brief visit to Cairo before returning to Tunis.

The Palestinian official, who wanted to remain anonymous, said the PLO believed Mr. Assad was angry over Mr. Arafat's comments that Syria could agree to a separate peace with Israel.

The PLO has recently shown

concern that Syria might strike a separate deal with Israel before a Palestinian-Israeli agreement on the final status of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Palestinian officials tried to play down such a concern last week, but the postponement of Mr. Arafat's visit to Damascus might again fuel rumours of a Syrian-PLO rift.

Mr. Abed Rabbo said there were no changes in the Palestinian's position ahead of the next round of the peace talks.

"We will stick to the basics... U.N. Resolution 242 is the reference for the peace process and the Palestinian authority (to be established for a self-rule period in the occupied territories) should have full legislative powers," he said.

Israel rejects the idea of a legislature for a planned Palestinian council to administer autonomy. It considers such a legislature as a feature of an independent state.

Mr. Abed Rabbo, who accompanied Mr. Arafat during his Amman visit, said the talks with His Majesty King Hussein constituted "a new qualitative move in Palestinian-Jordanian relations."

Let them not break Iraq apart

By Yasmin Bahmani

WASHINGTON — Growing up in a Shiite family in Baghdad, I watched the women celebrate when a wish had been granted. I remember my aunt's friends hugging my sister and me as they came through the front door to celebrate the chai Al Abbas, or the tea of Abbas, named for uncle of the Prophet Mohammed. My aunt served strong tea and Iraqi flat bread with fresh parsley and chives. The women chatted while my sister and I played on the cool tile floor.

My family also has a sadder memory of Shiite life in Iraq. During a 1979 purge, members of my community muttered prayers each time they answered their doors. They feared that the person knocking might well be a government official asking for an identification card.

If the card identified the household as Sunni or Christian or some other minority, the family would be left alone. But if they were Shiites, the family would be subject to deportation to Iran.

My father's sister told me that when the authorities came to her door that year, she and her small children shivered in their bedroom. Her husband, a Sunni, showed his identification card, and fortunately the official went away.

But 40,000 others were not as lucky. They were deported to Iran; an unknown number were executed. Those who were deported were defined by the regime as "Iranians whose unfaithfulness to the Ba'ath revolution and homeland was proven."

The community took this as a message either to be quiet or to be deported or killed. Some of those who were deported became active members of the extremist Shiite movement and settled in Tehran. Deportations, arrests and executions, including those of non-political religious leaders to deter their activist relatives, continued during the Iran-Iraq war.

This has been on my mind since President George Bush, charging that Saddam Hussein had stepped up his campaign of "harsh repression" against Shiites, declared a "no-fly" zone for Iraqi planes in southern Iraq.

The Shiites of Iraq were grateful to have their plight recognised

by the West, as were the Kurds 18 months before. But when I think of my aunt, who was saved in 1979 by her Sunni husband, I also know that any sensible policy must seek to protect all Iraqis from Saddam Hussein.

It may not be Mr. Bush's intent to divide Iraq, but choosing to protect some Iraqis and not others is bound to lead to resentment among the different groups. A Sunni is not immune from Saddam Hussein simply because of religion. And Saddam Hussein might well take out his anger on Shiites in Baghdad. Only members of his ruling Ba'ath Socialist Party are safe.

Curiously, the no-fly zone excludes some of the holy Shiite shrines, which also happen to be the sites of Saddam Hussein's military action last year against Shiites. It also excludes Baghdad, although Shiites make up about half the city's population.

Shiites are a minority of about 10 per cent in the Arab World, but a majority in Iraq, constituting about 55 per cent of the population.

We lived peacefully with our neighbours and tolerated whatever government ruled us, whether Ottoman Turk or British, without expecting it to return the favour. Saddam Hussein changed this.

Recently he has tried to force a division between Sunnis and Shiites. When Ayatollah Khomeini, a revered religious figure who had no political role, died in July at the age of 90, Saddam Hussein forbade any form of funeral or public prayer.

Also in July, Saddam Hussein executed 42 merchants, accusing them of corruption. Many of them were Shiites. Last August, according to Middle East Watch, Saddam Hussein rounded up an estimated 2,500 Shiite men, women and children from the south and transported them to an army camp for execution.

Shiites are a community have never been fooled by Saddam Hussein's rhetoric of unity, freedom and socialism for all. Nor are they fooled by the fact that there are several Shiites in his government, as there are Christians and Kurds. Saddam Hussein oppresses Shiites because many of them oppose his secular Ba'athist ideology, which Shiites view as atheistic.

The Shiites of Iraq are a community of paradox. They are at once the most influenced by the clerics and, no doubt because of their underdog history, the most progressive people in a society deeply rooted in tradition.

Nevertheless, whether one is Shiite or Sunni remains a source of conflict in Iraq. The loyalty of Iraq's Shiites continues to be questioned. Governments in Iraq have long doubted the Shiite community's allegiance, accusing them of Persian sympathies, because Iran is Shiite.

The Shiite members of the opposition reject this view, although Saddam Hussein's policies have pushed many Shiites to react in a sectarian way and look to Iran for political ideology. But the opposition leaders say they do not want an Iran-inspired government. Nor do they want an independent Shiite state. They and the Kurds have pledged their commitment to a united Iraq.

Still, Mr. Bush's exclusion-zone plan runs the risk of emphasising the differences between Iraq's communities. And the people of Baghdad might come to resent the Kurds and Shiites who have had U.S. protection in the south.

International Herald Tribune.

New U.N. team plans tough inspection

(Continued from page 1)

on two Britons who have also been jailed for trespassing on Iraqi territory.

The families of the two criticised the British government Sunday for failing to win the men's release as quickly as Washington persuaded Baghdad to free Mr. Hall.

"The Americans must have pushed harder," Iris Wainwright, mother of jailed Michael Wainwright, told reporters.

"We have bitten our tongues to keep things quiet for diplomatic moves — but we have got nothing for it," added his sister Susan Priestley.

The wife of Paul Ride, the other Briton jailed in Baghdad, urged the Foreign Office to put stronger pressure on Iraq.

"I don't know how the Americans went about it, but obviously it was the right way," Julie Ride told British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) television. "We could learn a lesson there."

The Foreign Office Saturday rejected criticism from some politicians that it had done too

little to secure the freedom of the two men after the release of Mr. Hall.

"We're doing everything we can to obtain the release of Michael Wainwright and Paul Ride," a spokesman said. "We've approached the Iraqi directly both in London and in New York and are in touch with other governments about their case."

Sheikh Saad

(Continued from page 1)

three portfolios to members in the past.

Sharp criticism of the government and its royal members led to the emir's dissolving the body in 1986.

A delegation of senior members of the royal family wanted the crown prince to reconsider his position, but he had been unable over the last two days to change his mind, the Arab Times reported.

During the election campaign opposition groups called for the role of crown prince to be split from that of prime minister.

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Ivanisevic wins Australian Indoor final

SYDNEY (AP) — Goran Ivanisevic, feeding off the frenzied emotion of his fans, thoroughly dominated top-seeded Stefan Edberg Sunday to win the Sydney Indoor tennis tournament 6-4, 6-2, 6-4.

Ivanisevic, the No. 2 seed who lost to defending champion Edberg in last year's semifinals, collected the \$135,000 first prize and now has won their last three meetings.

"I was pumped today," said the 21-year-old Croatian. "I didn't feel I could lose the match."

He seemed to gather strength from the hundreds of rowdy fans who cheered every point he won, then chanted "Goran" and waved red-white-and-blue Croatian flags between games.

Ivanisevic yelled and pumped his fist in their direction several times in the final set. After he shook hands with Edberg at the net, he dashed into the packed upper deck to toss his shirt as a souvenir and hug several supporters.

Still exuberant at the awards

presentation, he popped open a well-shaken bottle of champagne and sprayed his coach, spectators, tournament officials and photographers.

Ivanisevic gave his fans part of the credit, saying they picked him up when he was emotionally down at times during the \$1.1 million event. He said that because of its strong Croatian community, Australia is like playing at home.

"They have me great support," he said. "It was a nice feeling. It gives me something extra. I play a bit for me and a bit for them."

The lean and lanky left-hander, who led the tour with an average 14 aces per match this year, yielded only 16 points in 14 service games. He rolled up 11 aces and blasted 24 other serves that Edberg never got back into play.

"He was really creaming his serves today," Edberg said. "I think it would have been hard for anyone to beat him when he's playing like that. When he gets up early like he did today, he serves loose. If he just hit second

serves today, it would have been a more even match."

Meanwhile, Ivanisevic broke the Swede five times, most importantly after Edberg had broken him to even the first set at 4-4. It was Edberg's first and last chance to break.

Edberg's net game, among the best in men's tennis, was left a shambles by ripping baseline shots that either found the corners or forced wild, awkward volleys in self-defense by nearly nailing him in the body. Edberg won only 15 points in his 31 trips to the net.

Edberg said he could only muster about 80 per cent power on his own serve until the third set, when it was too late — he was already down a break and Ivanisevic just had to hold serve the rest of the way. The fans' screaming cheers built steadily to the final point, but Edberg said it didn't bother him.

"I didn't really notice it that much," he said. "I had other things to think about. And you don't have much time to think out there."

There was also little time to celebrate, seek solace or take a siesta — both players are heading to Tokyo for an indoor tournament this week.

Ivanisevic can keep moving up from his No. 8 ranking, while Edberg still has hopes of retaking the top spot by the end of the year. It's a position that once seemed out of Ivanisevic's grasp because of his reputation for inconsistency, but he now believes he has a shot at it.

"Why not? It's pretty far, No. 1, but I have everything to dominate the game," he said. "People said I can't play grand slams, then I reached the final at Wimbledon."

He credited his increased concentration for a brief hospital stay earlier this year for a fast heart beat.

"That was a little bit scary... the worst four days of my life," Ivanisevic said. "I was not taking care. (Afterward) I noticed this change. I was starting to be more professional."

Inter angry after Italy drops Zenga

ROME (R) — A simmering row between Italian club Internazionale and national soccer coach Arrigo Sacchi has blown up again over experienced Inter goalkeeper Walter Zenga's continuing absence from his country's squad.

Zenga, a veteran of more than 50 internationals, was surprisingly left out of the Italian team which defeated the Netherlands 3-2 in a friendly last month.

There is again no place for him in the squad for next Wednesday's World Cup qualifier with Switzerland in Cagliari.

"Sacchi told me that Zenga would be recalled after the friendlies at the start of the season. It was a formal promise," Inter's general manager Piero Boschi was quoted as saying in newspapers.

"I maintain that there is a pre-determined position towards the goalkeeper. His absence cannot be explained by age... nor technical ability because he has proved to be in peak form this season," he added.

Inter are angry that only one of their players — midfielder Alessandro Bianchi — currently figures in Sacchi's plans.

Sacchi has opted to select two younger goalkeepers — Gianluca Pagliuca of Sampdoria and Torino's Luca Marchegiani — ahead of the 32-year-old Zenga.

Yet the national coach is expected to make AC Milan full-back Mauro Tassotti, 33 next January, the oldest international debutant in Italian soccer history in the vital match against the Swiss.

Magic back to training with Lakers

HONOLULU (AP) — Magic Johnson stopped a reporter in mid-sentence when asked about his health at the opening of the Los Angeles Lakers training camp.

"There's no question about my health. I'm playing basketball. I'm going to run and do everything everybody else does," Johnson said after the Lakers went through a 2½-hour workout. "I'm back."

It was unimportant that the Lakers looked a bit sluggish and confused as they learned the system of new coach Randy Pfund, a longtime Lakers assistant tapped when Mike Dunleavy left for

Milwaukee. What was important was that Magic was back — running up and down the court, making no-look, behind-the-back passes through a crowd of defenders as if he had never left.

Eleven months ago, Johnson stunned the world with his announcement that he had contracted the virus that causes AIDS and would have to retire. But after showing he could play during the NBA all-star game and the Olympics, Johnson decided to play again and announced his return last week.

He hopes to play a limited schedule of 50-60 games, but it remains to be seen if his physical

condition can withstand the rigors of pro ball and the travel that comes with it.

Johnson has no doubts about himself, though, and wants to talk about basketball and basketball only.

"I have to concentrate more on defense and boxing out," he said. "The offense will come naturally, that's always going to be there. I have some work to do. I love to play, I love to practice. I came out here to work. When you dread practice, you shouldn't be here."

Johnson, 33, at 106 kilograms, has gained weight, and says he feels comfortable playing at

that weight. "I feel good, I'm running the same. I'm just bigger."

Johnson had a hard time describing the wait for this day to arrive.

"I woke up two or three times during the night, just waiting for this moment," he said. "It finally got here and it was a great feeling. I was so nervous I felt like a rookie again."

"I couldn't dream it (returning) last night. I didn't know what was going to happen. I just flowed right into it. It was great — sweating, hitting people, people hitting me — that's the fun of it all."

Chris Evert praises new life

BOCA RATON, Florida (AP) — Nearly a year into motherhood, Chris Evert has only good things to say about it.

"It's been more wonderful than I could ever imagine," the seven-time French Open and six-time U.S. Open champion said. Her son, Alex, turns 1 Monday.

"He wants to be a ballerina," she said. "He's always throwing them around."

Chris and Alex appeared at a news conference to promote her annual celebrity tournament Oct. 30-Nov. 1. Proceeds will go to the Hurricane Andrew relief effort.

Alex's first public forehead without a racquet — knocked his mother's carrying to the floor. His one-handed backhand nearly dislodged her microphone.

Also present was Alex's father, Andy Mill, who carried a diaper bag that had an undersized racquet protruding from a side compartment. It may be awhile before Alex has his first lesson, though.

"Tennis is tough on kids," Evert said. "Any sport where you start out so young before you form your personality is tough. Jennifer (Capriati) has gone through that this year."

Evert, ranked No. 1 in the world for seven years, achieved on-court success with steady groundstrokes, determination and concentration. Compared with the rigors of raising a child, Evert said, she never realized how easy she had it.

"You don't know until you have one how your patience is tested," Evert said. "I had it when I played, but for two hours, not 24."

Evert hopes her tournament will raise \$80,000 to rebuild a migrant farm worker center in Honduras. Likely participants include former boxing champion Sugar Ray Leonard, retired baseball player Gary Carter and John Oates, comedian Alan King and women's world sprint record-holder Florence Griffith-Joyner.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY OCTOBER 12, 1992
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: While our Canadian friends are enjoying Thanksgiving you have a fine day to think in terms of organizing the practical and material aspects of your life enabling you to operate more efficiently...

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You feel too tied down to some advanced course of action that is taking longer than you had expected to handle but persevere in a thoughtful manner.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You are tied down to some obligation that seems to be unending but accept and carry through in a steadfast manner and you will gain amazing benefits.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Consider well what outside matters await your attention and put a smile on your face as you do them and then the public is pleased by your attitude.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Think about what you can do to improve the operative skills of your regular activities and you find they get in a more satisfactory groove.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You have some duty you know you should go ahead with for your close companion and if you do so you will find that you get some rich rewards by so doing.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You have many things to do at your residence that are doubtless a pain in the neck but this is only one day to take out of a full, brimmingover life.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You have many errands and other things to attend to and don't put them off especially where articles of beauty furnishings, supplies of all kind are concerned.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Rely upon the affection and good will of a friend to assist you now in procuring the various personal wishes what most animate your efforts.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You feel as though you cannot break out from under some duty that seems unending but by listening to encouragement of your attachment it is easier to do.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A friend who is usually pretty reticent and offish can be the person now who understands what you are trying to do and will aid you over rough spots.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Follow the instructions today of a demanding official who actually has your good at heart and don't be with depressing friends until they cheer up.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is the day for you to avoid the limelight at all costs and if you want some outside interests, the best for you is one of a different stance.

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris

"If men like electronic stuff so much, how come you hate to use the vacuum cleaner?"

Beauty & Luck
Coming together in Salon Saint Laurent for Ladies
Win Daihatsu - Charade Model 1993 and other valuable prizes

The condition for lottery: Come and attend Salon Saint Laurent for Ladies and choose any of many services which offered you by the best latest equipment and international cosmetics, on the perfect hands which get the highest certificates in beautician art, and get the coupon which let you participate in the lottery on Daihatsu-Charade Model 1993 and other valuable prizes.

You have the right to participate in more than one coupon if you will increase your visit to our salon.

This offer will remain till 31-12-92. Lottery will be held on 1-1-1993, under the auspices of the concerned authority.

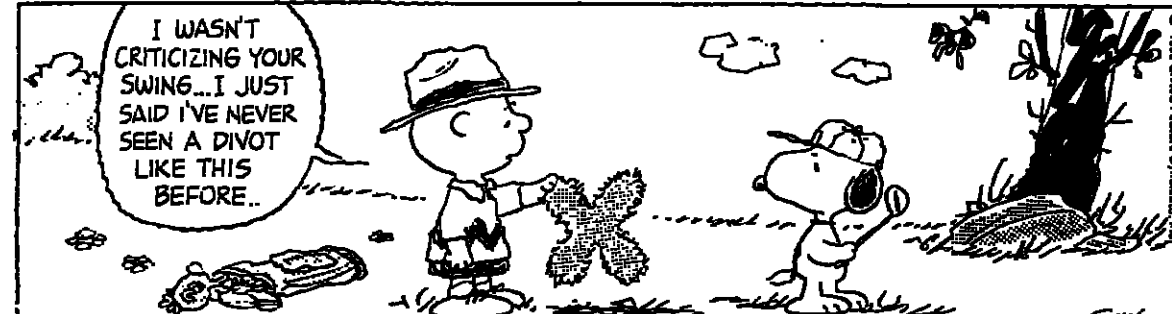
The offered prizes:
★ Daihatsu-Charade car model 1993, five doors.
★ Television - Samsung 26 inch with remote-control.
★ Video-Samsung Pal-Scam with remote-control.
★ Stereo-Samsung - double cassette and radio digital with equalizer.
★ Refrigerator - West Point 16 feet - no frost 2 doors.
★ Washing-machine West Point - 2 basins.
★ 20 sewing bank book - for each amount JD 50.
★ In addition to other valuable prizes.

We are taking care of your beauty

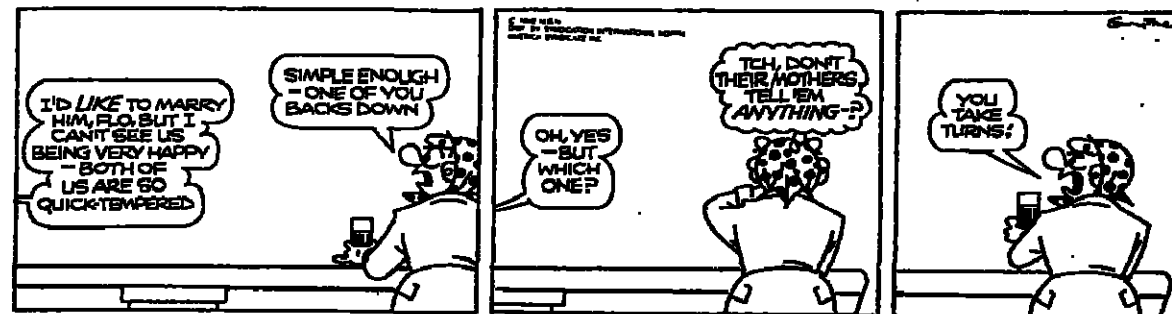
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Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Forget claims his third Toulouse title
TOULOUSE (R) — Frenchman Guy Forget won his third Toulouse Open tennis title and his first tournament of the year when he beat Petr Korda of Czechoslovakia in straight sets Sunday. Forget, who won six titles including Toulouse last year but who has struggled to rediscover his best tennis since, scored a 6-3, 6-2 victory against the world number five in just under an hour-and-a-half.

Kasparov wins 4-2 in first round
BUENOS AIRES (AP) — World chess champion Garry Kasparov lost one game, drew two and won three, to lead 4-2 in the first round of a two-round match with Argentina's Olympic chess team. International master Pablo Ricardi, with white, scored Argentina's only victory. Jorge Rubinietti and Pablo Zarnicki, both with black, played to a draw. Kasparov, playing black, defeated grand master Oscar Panno and Claudia Amura, and Hugo Spangenberg with white. After the match, organized by the Buenos Aires Armenian community, Kasparov will tour the country.

Newcastle stretches winning streak
LONDON (R) — Newcastle stretched their perfect record to 10 matches in the English First Division with a 1-0 home win over Tranmere. Newcastle, managed by former England international Kevin Keegan, increased to eight points their lead over second-placed Charlton, who lost 2-1 at Bristol City. They were no Premier League matches with England preparing for a World Cup qualifying match at home to Norway Wednesday.

Fischer takes 7-3 lead over Spassky
BELGRADE (R) — Former world chess champion Bobby Fischer beat Boris Spassky in the 17th game of their \$5 million replay series in Belgrade, giving him a 7-3 lead. "It was a technical win," said Fischer after the game, which comprised 58 moves and six and half hours of play.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA KESCH
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GETTING IT RIGHT, BACKWARD

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ J9643
♥ K
♦ Q62
♣ 10987

WEST
♠ A K 7
♥ 108653
♦ J8743
♣ Void

EAST
♠ Q 10 8 5 2
♥ 9 8 4
♦ K 10 5
♣ 5 4 3

SOUTH
♠ Void
♥ A Q J 7 3
♦ A 9
♣ A K Q J 6 2

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
3 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
4 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass
7 ♠ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠

If you can't see how to secure your contract along normal lines, consider making dummy the master hand. Because this is a roundabout way of solving your problem, it is known in the trade as a "dummy reversal."

Two-suited hands, especially those with clubs as the anchor suit, cannot be described easily if you start the auction with an artificial,

forcing opening bid of two clubs. Hence South's decision to open one club and follow with a jump in hearts. After a club preference from North, a red-suit cue-bid from each partner convinced South a grand slam would have play.

West led a top spade, ruffed high in the closed hand. A trump to the ten revealed the 3-0 split, and declarer realized he had a problem. Unless hearts were 4-3, declarer would have to ruff a losing heart as well as a diamond in dummy, and removing East's kings first would leave only one trump on the table.

The fact dummy's trumps were high suggested an alternate line that would improve on the 62 percent probability of a favorable heart division — a dummy reversal. Declarer ruffed another spade high, crossed to the king of hearts and ruffed a third spade high, and then crossed to a trump to ruff a fourth spade with dummy's remaining trump.

A low heart ruffed in the table provided the entry to draw the last trump, declarer discarding a diamond from hand. The ace of diamonds was the entry back to the closed hand to cash the good hearts, and the grand slam was home.

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles. One letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

HYBUS
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

SNOWO
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

COLKUN
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

KANTLE
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

THE PRIZEFIGHTER TURNED JOKES THAT WERE THIS.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: "□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □"

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumble: JERKY LITHE STICKY GAMBLE
Answer: When they called the boss at the dairy plant — THE BIG CHEESE

THE Daily Crossword by Geraldine S. Harris

ACROSS

- Province
- Trainer's birthplace
- Immortals
- Sound
- Recess work
- Yoko —
- Record players of old
- Cyst
- 20th Farm sports
- Flag
- Card game
- Peripartite
- Engrooves
- Enroing
- 30 Diving duck
- 32 Western movie classic
- 33 "Therapy" harps —
- 34 Pronoun
- 37 Flanagan
- 38 Month
- 39 Nucleus
- 40 Where Buenos Aires is abstr.
- 41 "I's — Day
- 42 Pishit color
- 43 Synophant
- 46 Delectable
- 48 Dorsal works
- 49 I or u
- 50 A — able
- 52 Balkan d —
- 53 Spanish gold
- 57 Sellers film (with "The")
- 60 Tally
- 61 — Pyle
- 62 Split five — (fish)
- 63 Bizarre
- 64 and bounds
- 66 Stage whisper

DOWN

- From — to
- Riches
- Continental
- 5 Hebrew month
- 6 Residue
- 8 Hung, composer
- 7 God of love
- 8 Fur
- 9 Pub drink
- 10 Braising spell
- 11 Anno-holder
- 12 Motortless
- 13 Fortified acts
- 18
- 23 First lady
- 25 BB
- 26 Wad
- 27 Movie dog
- 28 Bear
- 29 Home of a masin festival
- 30 Wander
- 31 Garret's name
- 33 Church section
- 35 Dies —
- 36 Phosho word
- 38 New birds
- 39 Contrasts
- 41 Surgical
- 42 Instrument
- 43 Eclectic wheel
- 44 "Where the Boys —"
- 45 Spanish lady
- 46 Convex molding
- 47 — over (studied)
- 48 Tubes
- 50 Christie
- 51 Onit
- 53 Far Eastern
- 54 Cello
- 56 Anger
- 58 Capers
- 59

Financial Markets
in co-operation with
Cairo Amman BankForeign Exchange Market Summary
(October 5 - October 9, 1992)

AMMAN — The dollar posted sharp gains during the course of last week benefiting from bouts of short covering and optimistic expectations over the timing of the turn-around in the direction of interest rate differentials between the dollar and the mark. The U.S. currency thus finished the week five per cent higher against the mark and two per cent higher against the British pound and the yen.

Trading was volatile Monday as the dollar shadowed developments in New York's stock exchange. The U.S. unit dropped to a low of 1.3890 marks during the day as the Dow Jones nosedived, but recovered breaching 1.42 marks when stock prices recovered. At 1.4215 marks and 1.7133 dollars to the pound, the U.S. currency closed at what proved to be its lowest levels of the week.

Speculation over the timing of a narrowing of the dollar/mark yield gap became the theme of trading activity when the Fed defied the widely-held expectations of the previous week and did not cut interest rates following its Open Market Committee meeting. Waves of dollar short-covering thus continued for the next three days, gaining more momentum as it coincided with falling European money market rates. A fall in German money market interest rate from 9.70% to 8.95% in particular, fueled speculation over whether it was a mere compromise from the Bundesbank, or whether it was a prelude before the German central bank cut its Lombard and/or discount rates.

The dollar thus jumped by more than two pennings Wednesday and then by another three pennings Thursday, after the release of positive U.S. economic statistics. Retail sales were reported to have risen by 7 per cent in September, while jobless claims, for the week ended Sept. 26, declined to 400,000 from 424,000 the previous week.

While trading quieted down Friday, the dollar firmed further before the close of New York on a revival of safe-haven demand. News that Iraqi soldiers had detained an American citizen sparked fears of another confrontation. Market anxiety over the outcome of an EC meeting on Oct. 16th provided further support. But while pre-weekend position squaring capped the dollar's rise, it nevertheless closed at its highest of the week.

Expectations over the dollar's direction this week remain somewhat mixed, as analysts were skeptical of the market's optimism over the timing of the narrowing of the dollar-mark interest rate gap. Referring to a statement by a Bundesbank board member, in which he expected German money supply growth to ease after November, they pointed out that there could be at least a period of two months before German interest rates would be cut (i.e. in December). It remains expedient, however, to emphasize that such a decision is no longer a matter of German domestic policy, but could be overturned on political (ERM) grounds. Hence the high degree of uncertainty.

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	2/10/92	9/10/92	Percent Change
Sterling Pound	1.7285	1.6920	(2.11%)
Deutsche Mark	1.4095	1.4880	(5.28%)
Swiss Franc	1.2315	1.3160	(6.86%)
French Franc	4.7700	5.0460	(5.47%)
Japanese Yen	119.38	121.85	(2.03%)

100 Per 100

Euro-Currency Interest Rates

Currency	9/10/92	10/10/92	9/10/92	10/10/92
U.S. Dollar	2.95	3.18	3.06	3.43
Sterling Pound	9.06	8.31	8.94	8.19
Deutsche Mark	8.95	8.31	9.00	8.00
Swiss Franc	6.56	6.37	6.00	6.12
French Franc	13.00	10.00	11.50	9.62
Japanese Yen	4.12	3.62	4.06	3.62

Interest rate bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. \$100,000 or equivalent.

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin
Date: 11/10/92

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.680	.682
Sterling Pound	1.1493	1.155
Deutsche Mark	.4565	.4588
Swiss Franc	.5157	.5183
French Franc	.1347	.1354
Japanese Yen	.5572	.560
Dutch Guilder	.4061	.4081
Swedish Krona	.1216	.1222
Italian Lira	.0521	.0524
Belgian Franc	.02218	.02229

Per 100

Nigerian interbank rates
soar above 100%

LAGOS (R) — Nigeria's banking system is in disarray as interest rates soar to record heights and cash-strapped banks are forced to borrow funds to keep liquid, bankers have said.

"Only speculators and traders can afford to borrow at prevailing rates. This can't be good for the economy," a Western banker working in Lagos told Reuters.

The situation has been made worse by uncertainty surrounding the military government's plans to restore civilian rule in January following its decision to suspend presidential primaries to investigate allegations of widespread electoral malpractice.

Interest rates have climbed to record heights since the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) withdrew 7.5 billion naira (\$390 million) from the banking system two weeks ago through the issue of compulsory stabilisation securities to banks.

Interbank rates — the rate at which banks lend to each other — are now as high as 110 per cent, twice the rate before the CBN mopped up liquidity to help check inflation and stabilise the naira's foreign exchange rates.

Prime lending rates are as high as 50 per cent and maximum rates even higher.

Industrialists say prevailing interest rates are crippling production in sub-Saharan Africa's biggest economy by denying cash-strapped producers affordable credit.

Most banks are concerned with surviving in a cash-tight environment.

"For most banks it is a question of trying to maintain your position, keep your liquidity and fund your books," he said.

Banks that borrow at the high end of interbank rates tend to be those in the most financial distress and face difficulties fulfilling their cash needs from outside the banking system.

Many banks also use the interbank market to fund their foreign exchange purchases from the official market.

Interbank rates have more than tripled since a 41 per cent currency devaluation in March. Prime lending rates have doubled as import-dependent producers sought credit to buy expensive foreign exchange.

Bankers say the CBN's policy of issuing stabilisation securities to banks without notice also drove up interest rates by creating unnecessary panic within the banking system.

They say the CBN was unlikely to achieve its aim of stemming inflation, now running at above 50 per cent, and stabilising the weak naira by squeezing banks.

"The CBN should target the government's budget overspending since it is source of the money it is trying to mop up," said one banker.

The military government recorded a 14.8 billion naira (\$751 million) budget deficit during the first half of 1992, after promising to reverse a trend of overspending.

The government, with outstanding programmes to complete before relinquishing power, may find it difficult to avoid a huge deficit at the end of the year after overspending by a record 35.31 billion naira (\$1.8 billion) last year.

"We may have to wait until after January for some sanity to return to the financial sector," said a commercial banker.

"But I wouldn't hold your breath, judging by the way that some of the civilian politicians have been spending money on their election campaigns," he pointed out.

Italian parliament
passes
cost-cutting
package

ROME (Agencies) — The Italian government won a conclusive confidence vote on a controversial package of spending cuts in a parliamentary session late Saturday.

The lower house, where Prime Minister Giuliano Amato's administration has a 16-seat majority, approved the 23.8 trillion lire (\$18 billion) package by 303 voters to three against, with 11 abstentions.

The vote was almost declared invalid because the quorum of 316 deputies in the 630-seat house was only exceeded by one.

Opposition deputies left before the final vote to jeering and cries of "buffoons" from members of the majority.

Parliament had earlier passed separate confidence votes on the four sections of the bill relating to health, public sector employment, welfare and local finance.

The bill will return to the upper house, the senate, in the next few days for approval of the changes passed by the lower house before it becomes law.

The Amato government, battling with the largest budget deficit in the European Community, decided to ram the bill through on a confidence vote after sniping from members of its own majority.

The procedure also buries some 1,200 amendments sought by deputies of all parties who want to water down the programme.

The government also plans to steer a 1993 austerity budget through parliament which would cut public spending by a further \$75 billion and go a long way to dismantling the welfare state.

The prime minister said recently that Italy was in its worst crisis since the years just after World War II.

"This is the gravest crisis there has been after that of 1946-47 ... when we were discussing changing the currency, when inflation was sky-high, when the country was destroyed," said Mr. Amato.

U.S., China sign
landmark trade pact

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. and Chinese negotiators Saturday signed a landmark agreement that will open China's huge market, while averting a trade war.

The United States had vowed to impose punitive tariffs on up to \$3.9 billion of Chinese goods if China did not move to lift trade restrictions by midnight Saturday.

"It was signed at 11:30 p.m. (0830 GMT)," a spokesman for the U.S. trade representative's office told Reuters by telephone.

"This agreement will create new opportunities for our businesses, our farmers and our workers. This is truly a win-win situation," said Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Michael Moskowitz.

"This provides... unprecedented access to a rapidly growing economy of 1.1 billion people," he said.

The pact also moves China closer to membership in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the world trade body, but Mr. Moskowitz said Beijing had other steps to take before it was eligible to join GATT.

The United States exported \$6.3 billion of goods to China last year and may sell \$7.5 billion next year. Chinese exports to the United States are forecast to total \$19 billion this year — and could jump to \$25 billion in 1993.

Under the agreement, China will quickly remove most import licensing requirements, quotas and controls, which should increase U.S. exports by hundreds of millions of dollars in the short run and billions over the long haul.

The cuts in import barriers will particularly help U.S. sales of computers, car parts, some film and cameras, compressors, air conditioners and medical equipment among other goods," Mr. Moskowitz said.

China has also agreed to cut tariffs sharply by Dec. 31, 1993, on chemicals, machinery, steel, farm equipment and other goods.

U.S. car makers involved in joint ventures in China will be able to import parts and components from the United States, including kits to then be made into vehicles.

About 75 per cent of the Chinese import restrictions and quotas covered by the pact will be phased out within the first two years of the agreement, Mr. Moskowitz said.

The agreement came after a year of talks in Beijing and Washington that ended with intense negotiations last week in 1989.

Washington. Political observers said President George Bush was likely to tout the agreement as another foreign economic success of his administration.

U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills said in August that the United States would impose tariffs of up to 100 per cent on Chinese goods if Beijing did not move to open its closed market by the Saturday deadline.

The punitive tariffs — normal U.S. duties are five to 10 per cent — would have been imposed on goods such as footwear, silk apparel, industrial hardware and electronic equipment.

The United States had charged China with unfair trading practices that included limits or outright bans on some goods and import licensing, standards and regulations designed specifically to exclude foreign products.

The agreement helps ease U.S. relations with China that have been strained recently by alleged Chinese use of prison labour to make goods for export and violations of other trade agreements, notably in textiles.

In addition, Congress has remained hostile to China for its military repression of pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen square in Beijing in 1989.

Bad management blamed
for heavy losses at Lloyd's

LONDON (R) — A report into heavy losses suffered by participants in Lloyd's insurance market, the biggest in the world, blames poor underwriting and bad management, market sources said Saturday.

The report looked into the losses incurred by Lloyd's "names" — wealthy individuals who underwrite insurance risks in the hope of high returns — who took part in syndicates run by Lloyd's managing agency Gooda Walker.

Lloyd's said in June that its syndicates lost £2 billion (\$3.4 billion) in 1989, its biggest loss in 300 years of trading. About 43 per cent of the loss fell on about 4,000 members of just two man-

aging agencies. Gooda Walker and Feltrim.

The 1,500-page report, sent to the names Friday, said Lloyd's underwriters failed to recognise the scale of the risks to which they were exposed and had been too willing to run high risks in the hope of big profits.

It said risks were too highly concentrated among a few names, who were often not given enough relevant information. But it did not find any evidence of wrongdoing.

The report echoed the conclusions of a wider investigation into Lloyd's business earlier this year which said the insurance market did not give its members sufficient protection.

The new report said Lloyd's firms should keep tighter control

of underwriting and provide names with more information about the risks they were running.

It suggested more reinsurance against catastrophes should be arranged outside Lloyd's.

Claims from disasters like the Piper Alpha North Sea oil rig fire, the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska and the Los Angeles earthquake proved equally disastrous for some Lloyd's names.

Alfred Dool-Steinberg, chairman of a group of names which plans to sue Lloyd's for negligence, welcomed the report.

"This does make it perfectly clear that there was great negligence," he told Reuters. "We will be pressing very hard for changes to be put into effect. For these safeguards not to be in place already is a scandal."

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Taiwan's foreign
exchange reserves
surge to \$90 billion

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan's foreign exchange reserves, the world's largest, surged to a record \$90 billion in early September, and the figure could jump to about \$92 billion this year, central bank officials has said.

The foreign exchange reserves were \$89.4 billion at the end of August, up from \$88 billion in July and \$75.8 billion in August 1991.

A senior central bank official attributed the increase to the appreciation of the yen and mark as well as interest on Taiwan's reserves deposited at about 100 major foreign banks and other financial institutions abroad.

"If the U.S. dollar continues its current level abroad, it could boost our currency reserves to about \$92 billion by the end of the year," he said.

The reserves exclude gold holdings worth about \$6 billion and central bank loans of about \$7.5 billion to the island's foreign currency interbank market, private and public companies in the past few years.

"If all these figures are added up, our foreign exchange assets are already well over \$100 bil-

lion," the official said.

Central bank governor Samuel Shieh said the government would encourage local business to hold foreign exchange to prevent total official reserves from rising too fast. He did not give details but foreign currency sold to local banks ends up at the central bank, and adds to official reserves.

About 60 per cent of the foreign exchange reserves were denominated in U.S. dollars, 22 per cent in Deutschmarks, 11 per cent in yen, and the rest in pounds sterling and other major currencies, the senior central bank official said.

Taiwan now holds about 55 per cent of the foreign exchange reserves in the form of securities issued by foreign governments and institutions, and the rest as bank deposits.

Taipei was the biggest buyer of U.S. government securities in the first quarter of 1992.

About a third of the foreign exchange reserves are held in the United States, a third in Europe and the rest in Japan and other countries. None is held in Taiwan.

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Shevardnadze laments election troubles, but expects victory

TBILISI (AP) — Former Soviet minister Eduard Shevardnadze appeared headed to election as speaker of the Georgian parliament as Georgians cast ballots across their tiny strife-torn land Sunday.

Mr. Shevardnadze, running unopposed for Georgia's highest post, cast his ballot at voting station No. 2 in downtown Tbilisi at 10 a.m. (0600 GMT), three hours after the polls opened. Surrounded by about 10 bodyguards, he spent 15 minutes filling out the ballot.

"The turnout in Tbilisi is quite high," Mr. Shevardnadze said as he left the booth. "Thank you for your support."

Asked for whom he voted, the white-haired Shevardnadze laughed and said: "I voted for Shevardnadze."

A crowd surrounded the balloting station and many people applauded as he appeared.

By 9 a.m. (0500 GMT), 470,000 out of 3.6 million eligible voters had cast ballots nationwide, according to the Central Election Committee.

The elections are seen as a referendum on Mr. Shevardnadze's stewardship of the four-man State Council, which he was headed since returning to his native land last March after a civil war that drove popularly elected President Zviad Gamsakhurdia into exile. Mr. Gamsakhurdia was regarded in Georgia and the West as a dictator who fuelled

ethnic unrest, but his violent ouster left Georgia without a constitutional government.

Mr. Shevardnadze needed one-third of the votes cast to become speaker of the parliament, a post created to replace the presidency in Georgia.

Mr. Shevardnadze had ruled Georgia as first secretary of the Communist Party from 1972 until 1985, when Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev summoned him to Moscow to be foreign minister. Together, the two men helped end the cold war.

Peace did not return to Georgia with Mr. Shevardnadze. Armed supporters of Mr. Gamsakhurdia and separatists remain active in Abkhazia in the west and South Ossetia in north central Georgia. The economy is in ruins.

Because of the fighting, voting was not being held in nine districts of western Georgia, Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia, depriving up to 200,000 people of their right to vote. Elections will be held later in those districts, Mr. Shevardnadze has said.

Georgian police reported no incidents at balloting stations in the rest of Georgia by mid-morning, despite earlier warnings that Gamsakhurdia followers planned terrorist acts.

Besides the bodyguards accompanying Mr. Shevardnadze, little security was visible around the polling booths.

Voters were given lists of local



Eduard Shevardnadze

candidates and asked to choose one, a long list of party names to choose three, and a blue slip of paper with Mr. Shevardnadze's name, to circle to vote for or cross out to vote against.

"I voted for Shevardnadze," said Otar Chitashvili, a 32-year-old engineer who cast his ballot in the prosperous Vake district. "Only Shevardnadze can bring us peace, stability and development."

The head of the Electoral Committee for the station, Gili Tazdgeridze, said 190 of 2,600 registered voters cast their ballots by 9 a.m., "a very good figure."

At the less prosperous Chuguretsky district, 80 of the 1,500 registered voters cast ballots within 40 minutes after the polls

opened, and officials said turnout was high.

Nearly everyone questioned at both districts backed Mr. Shevardnadze.

"Two years ago, I voted for Gamsakhurdia, because I trusted him, and because that is what my neighbours and friends told me to do," said Taisla Shengelia, a 46-year-old housewife. "Today, I voted for Shevardnadze because everyone around is saying that only he can save us."

Mr. Gamsakhurdia's Round Table Coalition won a parliamentary majority in voting two years ago, and last summer he ran successfully for the new post of president. The State Council decided to eliminate the post of president.

Maria Kuntseva, 55, a pensioner, asked in Russian whether there were any former Communists on the list of parties. In the end, she voted for the Socialist Workers Party and for Mr. Shevardnadze, who is not affiliated with any of the 47 parties and blocks that have nominated candidates.

Up for grabs are 235 legislative seats. Voters will pick 150 lawmakers from candidates put forth by parties, and 84 from territorial districts.

About 40 foreign observers were no hand to monitor the elections, including delegations from the United States, Canada, Britain and the European Parliament.

Croats say Serbs moving on Gradacac

ZAGREB (R) — The Muslim-held Bosnian town of Gradacac was under heavy artillery fire Sunday and its Serb attackers were moving more troops and weapons towards it, Croatian radio reported.

The key north Bosnian town of Bosanski Brod fell last Tuesday and nearby Gradacac is one of the few centres preventing the Serbs from taking total control of a corridor running along the Croatian border.

The radio's report said the Serbs were moving men and artillery south from Bosanski Samac and Modrica towards the Gradacac defence lines.

A source at the radio station in Serb-held Brcko, a few kilometres to the east, said Serbs now controlled areas in the suburbs of Gradacac and had found the bodies of about 20 Croat or Muslim soldiers left behind when their units abandoned trenches in the western part of the town.

Fighting was still going on, said the source.

Croatian radio also said the Muslim-run crisis centre outside Brcko had appealed to the international community for "effective help." Implicitly dismissing international peace efforts made so far.

"We are fed up with resolutions which bring us only cluster bombs and napalm," the radio quoted the centre as saying.

The Brcko Radio Station source said that on Saturday Serb forces threw back an attack by Muslims and Croats on nearby villages.

The source quoted an army statement as saying Croatian artillery had shelled suburbs of Brcko from across the border Saturday, inflicting heavy damage.

The Croats had temporarily cut the northern corridor near Gorice, five kilometres west of Brcko, Saturday but Serb units had reopened it Sunday, the source added.

Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency said a Bosnian Serb army statement had reported heavy fighting over Saturday night and Sunday morning in western Herzegovina, especially between Mostar and Nevesinje.

Croatian radio said a bomb had exploded in the main street of Dabrovnik Friday night, causing damage but no casualties.

The historic port of Dabrovnik was a target during the fighting in Croatia last year and earlier this year but has been quiet for several months.

Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital, was quiet. But a fourth child died in hospital after a being hit by shrapnel from a mortar bomb in the old town Saturday.

The 2½-year-old girl had had one leg amputated and died while surgeons were deciding whether she must also lose the other one.

Sporadic sniping in the city again prevented engineers from trying to reconnect electricity and water supplies cut off for the past two weeks.

But the resumed relief airlift to Sarajevo continued despite heavy rain and poor visibility.

Three planes landed during the morning and 13 more were expected during the day, a United Nations spokesman told Reuters.

No posters adorn the streets, campaigning has been minimal and radio, television and newspapers largely ignored the event in the run-up to the vote.

But as the seven million voters began trickling to 9,500 polling stations Sunday the media, mainly controlled by the ruling Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS), turned the spotlight onto a vote which could indirectly change the bloodied face of Yugoslav politics.

They will also elect a new, younger and more reform-

Government and rebels fight on Burma border

TANA KWE, Burma (R) — Fighting between Burmese government troops and Karenni rebels is raging on the eastern frontier despite an announcement by Rangoon that it had suspended military operations against ethnic insurgents.

A seventh day of combat Friday saw heavy casualties on both sides.

Mortar duels and machinegun exchanges could be heard all morning at this battlefield close to the Thai border when the Karenni attacked a government frontline base.

"We are well prepared. They have been trying unsuccessfully to seize this place for three years and this year it will be the same," said Aung Mya, deputy commander of the separatist army as he monitored the fighting with a radio walkie-talkie.

"Keep moving and take it, boys, and you can have hot rice for lunch," he said over the radio to encourage his men to attack the hilltop position a few hundred metres away.

The Karenni are one of a dozen or so ethnic minorities who have been fighting Rangoon virtually since Burma's independence from Britain in 1948. They have

about 1,000 guerrillas. Burmese Foreign Minister U Nu Gyaw told the United Nations General Assembly in New York Monday that the government had halted operations.

On Thursday 10 people were killed and more than 40 wounded.

A frontline fighter's voice crackled over the radio: "We've overrun the enemy's position now. We're sending down the wounded, please have a medic ready."

A man shot in the face was carried on a stretcher down the hill to the main Karenni base. His uniform was taken off before he was loaded onto a pick-up truck and sent for treatment at a hospital in the Thai town of Mae Hong Son.

"We found three enemy bodies," said Sae Nethu as he led his wounded comrade down.

At the guerrilla base, well-protected between two hills, three men were cooking rice in huge pots. The rice is packed in banana leaves and sent to the front.

Other soldiers cleaned their weapons and some rested under the shade of trees after standing guard during the night.

De Klerk recalls parliament to take on rightwingers

CAPE TOWN (R) — President F.W. De Klerk has set up a parliamentary showdown with diehard white rightwingers who say he has committed political suicide by apologising for apartheid.

The African National Congress (ANC), which says he has not gone far enough, will be flexing its muscles outside parliament Monday at the start of a special 10-day session.

Mr. De Klerk, under intense Conservative pressure to slow the transition to democracy, is expected to open the session at

about 3:30 p.m. (1330 GMT) with a state-of-the-nation address.

Mr. De Klerk decided in June to interrupt the traditional six-month recess for a short session to ratify decisions made in multi-party democracy talks.

The negotiations resumed last month after a four-month hiatus but no proposals have yet been agreed on the route to an all-race democracy.

Nelson Mandela's ANC hopes to assemble up to 25,000 blacks for a march to the gates of the parliament that has excluded them since it was built in 1910.

China prepares for future without Deng

PEKING (R) — China's 14th Communist Party congress, which opens Monday, will endorse Deng Xiaoping's henchmen and philosophy, helping to ensure the veteran leader's vision for China's future outlasts him.

Mr. Deng has accepted an invitation to be a special delegate to the congress, spokesman Liu Zhongde told a news conference. It could be the 88-year-old patriarch's last major public appearance.

Mr. Liu said Mr. Deng, who resigned most of his official posts at China's last congress five years ago, had been invited because he was the architect of the only plan that could save China.

"Comrade Deng Xiaoping's theory and guideline of building socialism with Chinese characteristics have opened up the only correct road for China's building of socialism," Mr. Liu said. "He is the chief architect of China's socialist reform and opening up and modernisation drive."

Mr. Deng came out of seclusion earlier this year to wage a one-man campaign to urge capitalist-style reforms that have sparked a burst of double-digit economic growth.

The 1989 delegates to the congress will enshrine Mr. Deng's pragmatic economic reform theory as the guiding philosophy that will lead China into the 21st century, Chinese sources said.

They will endorse the concept of a "socialist market economy" as the way to ensure double-digit growth continues but reaffirm the party's firm opposition to any political pluralism.

They will also elect a new, younger and more reform-

minded Central Committee, the 170-strong body which represents the highest layer of political power in China.

While all the important decisions have already been made by the handful of octogenarians who really rule the country, the Congress will be a matchless propaganda opportunity to tell China's 1.1 billion people what the new order is supposed to be.

"A Congress is important because it sets the line," said a Chinese intellectual who helped to draft work reports for previous congresses. "It is much harder to go against a policy if a congress has stated it."

Mr. Deng may already have made sure it is too late to change his basic policies.

In the 14 years since he became China's strongest political force, peasants have prospered, cities have become filled with consumer goods and people have the freedom to express themselves through business and entrepreneurship.

"There is no turning backward, the question is how fast to go forward and what aspects to emphasise, what areas to keep control over," said a Chinese source with good contacts within the Communist Party.

Those questions will be answered, in part, by the new leaders selected by the congress.

Communist Party General Secretary Jiang Zemin will set the tone with a keynote speech which will become the focus for the official media for months.

Mr. Jiang, who has jumped on the economic reform bandwagon, is assured of keeping his position, Chinese sources said.

Fierce fighting erupts in Angolan capital

LUANDA (R) — UNITA and government forces fought a fierce gunbattle on the streets of Luanda Sunday after a bomb exploded outside a hotel used by officials of the former rebel movement, witnesses said.

It was the worst violence since the country's first multi-party elections on Sept. 29-30 aimed at healing the wounds of a 16-year civil war.

UNITA, which has disputed its apparent loss to the MPLA government, said it took 12 policemen hostage and regarded the bomb blast at a hotel housing UNITA officials as an attack against it.

Witnesses said the shooting outside Hotel Turismo began

when gunmen in a black car opened fire at UNITA guards.

The guards returned fire. A few minutes later, dozens of government police and soldiers surrounded the hotel and random shooting broke out.

A gunbattle with rocket propelled grenade launchers and AK-47 assault rifles lasted for 30 minutes.

Portugal's TSF Radio reported that three UNITA soldiers were wounded. Journalists said they saw two wounded policemen being carried away. The fate of the hostages was not known.

Most of the UNITA leadership is in leader Jonas Savimbi's central highland stronghold of

Huambo to discuss the political crisis that erupted after the elections, which international observers have said were free and fair.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the bomb, which appeared to have been placed under a car near the hotel entrance.

"If anything like that happens near the old man (Savimbi), war will start immediately," said senior UNITA official Elias Salupeto Pena, surveying damaged windows.

"When people are in danger we will take no half measures."

There was no immediate comment from the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Li-

beration of Angola) government, which UNITA (National Movement for the Total Independence of Angola) fought until a May 1991 truce.

State radio said a team of U.N. mediators had arrived in Luanda to try to defuse tensions.

Angola's 10 million people are still awaiting results of the elections, held up by the government's charge that the movement tampered with the returns.

Mr. Salupeto Pena said the UNITA leaders planned to return to Luanda Monday and would not be intimidated into leaving the capital.

"We are not going to leave Luanda. If they want to kill us they can do it here," he said.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Gorbachev invited to Brandt funeral

BERLIN (R) — Germany wants Mikhail Gorbachev to attend the state funeral for Willy Brandt despite a travel ban imposed on the ex-Soviet leader by the Russian government, the Bild newspaper said Sunday. Bild said Chancellor Helmut Kohl had ordered aides to do whatever possible to persuade Russian President Boris Yeltsin to let Mr. Gorbachev come to next Saturday's memorial ceremony for Mr. Brandt in Berlin. Mr. Gorbachev has been barred from leaving Russia after he refused to testify at a constitutional court hearing into the role of the now outlawed Communist Party he once headed. Mr. Yeltsin, Mr. Gorbachev's political arch-rival, has ordered the confiscation of the building used by Mr. Gorbachev's political think-tank in Moscow. Mr. Brandt, a former Nobel Peace Prize laureate for starting East-West détente as West German chancellor in the 1970s, died Thursday at 78 and Mr. Gorbachev called him a "great democrat" and one of his closest political friends.

'Kyrgyzstan could leave CIS soon'

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan (R) — Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev predicted that his state could soon leave the 11-member Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) of former Soviet republics which he described as a temporary grouping. "We (the republics) need the Commonwealth for a transitional period. It slows down the negative consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Union," Mr. Akayev said in an interview Saturday in Bishkek, the Kyrgyz capital. "We in Kyrgyzstan see ourselves as independent and self-supporting in the near future. But to reach these goals we must keep ourselves attached to the Commonwealth for this transitional period." Mr. Akayev, a scientist who unlike other Central Asian leaders was never a top Communist official, hosted a summit of CIS leaders Friday which produced little more than agreements in principle to coordinate their economies more closely. He said Kyrgyzstan, a small Turkic-speaking mountainous republic bordering China, felt the Commonwealth should cease to exist politically in the near future but economic links between members should be retained.

Romanians vote in presidential run-off

BUCHAREST (R) — Romanians began voting Sunday in a presidential election run-off offering them a further chance to break with their Communist past, but incumbent President Ion Iliescu looked likely to retain office. Mr. Iliescu, 62, a former Communist official who came to prominence during Romania's bloody 1989 revolution, won 37 per cent of the vote in the first ballot two weeks ago, just short of the absolute majority needed for outright victory. His challenger, Bucharest University rector Emil Constantinescu, 52, standing for the main opposition Democratic Convention Alliance, got 31 per cent. Voting Sunday started slowly in wet and windy weather in the capital, Bucharest.

IRA kills off-duty police officer

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) — Two gunmen of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) killed an off-duty policeman Saturday as he was having a drink with his brother in a crowded downtown bar. The Royal Ulster Constabulary identified the victim as Constable Jim Douglas, 30. Police said the gunman singled out their target, fired three shots and fled. The officer was pronounced dead at the scene. As the IRA men left, they left a package at the door. Fearing that the package contained a bomb, army explosives efforts carried out a controlled explosion. The package proved to be harmless, police said.

Floods kill at least 60 in India

TRIVANDRUM, India (R) — Floods and landslides in India's southern Kerala state have killed at least 60 people and left thousands homeless, an official said Sunday. Chief Minister K. Karunakaran said heavy rain since Wednesday had caused reservoirs to overflow and started landslides. At least 60 people have been killed and 21 are missing, he said. The army has been called out to help local officials in rescuing marooned people and organising food supplies. School buildings are being used to house people whose homes have been washed away. Families of those killed will be given 10,000 rupees (\$380) each in aid, he added.

Destroyer or discoverer? Debate over Columbus' role clouds commemorations

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Five hundreds years ago, an Italian seaman hunting for the riches of India happened across an island in the Bahamas and claimed it for Spain.

Christopher Columbus' mistake transformed the world he came from — and devastated the one he found.

Almost everyone in the Americas and Europe, in one way or another, is a child of that October day in 1492.

This year's attempts to commemorate the anniversary, culminating when Columbus Day is observed Monday, have been bedeviled by confusion to rival the explorer's own.

Some honour him as a discoverer. Others revile him as a destroyer. There is rivalry over where he landed. There are squabbles over his bones.

Even Columbus wasn't sure of what he'd done. He once wrote that he thought he'd found a great new continent. But he later changed his mind.

"He died ... believing he had discovered a new route to India,"

said historian Carmelo Delgado, who helped plan Puerto Rico's quinquennial observances.

San Salvador Island in the Bahamas Monday plans a televised reenactment of Columbus' arrival on its shores.

Nearby Cat Island will hold lower-key celebrations, claiming Columbus actually arrived there first. And a recent National Geographic article maintained Columbus probably landed yet somewhere else.

Wherever that landfall was, the voices of the people Columbus found are lost to history. Spanish settlers rounded them up a few years later and forced them into slave labour. All apparently died of disease of maltreatment.

The Dominican Republic, site of Columbus' first settlement, had planned the most lavish American celebrations of his arrival, hosting a Papal visit and opening a 10-story, \$25 million lighthouse in Santo Domingo to hold his remains.

But those events have been shadowed by doubts and demonstrations. Police recently shot and

killed two protesters angry at the cost of the monument. World leaders who had thought of coming to the opening changed their minds as controversy grew.

The Pope has tried to distance himself from Columbus as well. He's only celebrating the arrival of Christianity in the new world, spokesmen say.

The Dominican Republic claims it has Columbus' remains, but Spain says the admiral's bones are still in Seville, which sponsored a world's fair this year in his honour, as well as a summit meeting of Latin American leaders.

"Not to be left out, Columbus' home town of Genoa sponsored a rival world's fair."

In fact, most large celebrations linked to Columbus, such as the summer Olympics in Barcelona, Spain, took place in Europe. He is viewed more warmly among the discoverers than among the destroyers.

"Today there is more awareness that the arrival of Columbus opened an epoch that destroyed,

conquered, killed and robbed the native nations," Mr. Delgado said.

In the United States, people planned to observe the Columbus Day holiday Monday in a variety of ways that mirror the ambivalent emotions stirred up by the explorer.

In Denver, a Columbus Day parade was called off minutes before it was to begin Saturday to avoid a clash with hundreds of American Indian activists, an organiser said.

About 100 would-be marchers, many wearing Indian folk costumes, left their floats behind and walked instead to the state capitol, where a crowd of about 200 sang songs and listened to speeches.

After the cancellation, American Indian Movement leader Russell Means led more than 500 supporters to a rally at a mock, burned-out Indian village.

There were no confrontations between the two groups.

Columbus will be honoured with a wreath-laying ceremony in Philadelphia and a parade featur-

ing prominent Italian-Americans in New York, while Indians in Columbus, Ohio — the largest city named after the explorer — plan a memorial service to focus attention on "atrocities" committed by the explorer.

Columbia — the nation named for the explorer — has planned only small-scale observances for Monday, wary of offending the Indian population or attracting terrorist attacks.

An Indian group said Saturday that army intervention in a protest by Indian and peasant groups Friday left 22 wounded, 21 detained and 16 missing.

The army intervened to prevent thousands of Indians and peasants from blocking the Pan American Highway outside Popayan, about 70 miles (112 kilometres) south of Cali, said Milton Santa Cruz, a spokesman for the National Organisation of Indians in Colombia. The highway connects Colombia to Ecuador and points south.

Colombia's guerrillas have threatened to disrupt any Columbus celebrations. The govern-

ment claims the rebels will attempt to infiltrate anti-Columbus protests by Indian activists.

In Peru, which has a much larger Indian population, Shining Path guerrillas bombed a Spanish bank in Lima Friday. Police said the attack was an anti-Columbus protest.

Mexico, with 10 million speakers of Indian languages, has seen protests ranging from marches to the hijacking of a city bus.

Five hundred Indian runners, one for each year since Columbus landed, Saturday covered the last miles (kilometres) of a 14,000-mile (22,400-kilometres) run billed as a "voyage of rediscovery."

Some 230 runners set out in May from Alaska, and 270 others from Peru, in August. Native peoples from as far as Alaska and Chile were to converge at midday before the ancient Aztec pyramids of Teotihuacan.

The choice of Teotihuacan, 30 miles (48 kilometres) north of Mexico City, was chosen to make a statement about the achievements of native cultures before

Columbus, organisers of the run said.

On Monday, the runners will head to downtown Mexico City for a final ceremony commemorating El Dia De La Raza — Day of the Races.

In Bolivia, about 30,000 Indian farmers planned to arrive Monday in Bolivia's capital, La Paz, where they were expected to shut down traffic. On Oct. 5, somebody in the regional city of Potosí blew up a statue of Queen Isabella — the Spanish monarch who sponsored Columbus' journey.

Indian protesters briefly occupied university campuses in Chile last week and leftists set off a bomb outside the Spanish embassy in Santiago, causing minor damage.

Rigoberta Menchu, a Guatemalan Indian rights activist, speaking to a native American conference in Nicaragua that ends Monday, said Columbus' arrival was no cause for festivities.

"We have nothing to celebrate about this merchant who came from Europe," he said.

COLUMN

Marilyn Monroe photographs star at London auction

LONDON (R) — Bidders crowded into a central London auction house to pay thousands of pounds for photographs of Marilyn Monroe. The star of the sale was a nude photograph of Monroe taken in 1949, when as a struggling 23-year-old actress, she badly needed the \$50 offered by photographer Tom Kelley. The photograph, showing her stretched sideways across a red satin sheet, her face turned to the camera, was later used in a celebrated calendar. Robert Smith, a bespectacled, middle-aged publisher paid £3,520 (\$6,000) for the classic pin-up. The shots were part of a sale of hundreds of pictures by photographers who specialised in snapping movie stars in Hollywood's heydays from the 1930s to the 1950s. The auction in London's upmarket Knightsbridge district included portraits of stars like Vivien Leigh, Clark Gable, Judy Garland, Ava Gardner, Marlon Brando and Charles Laughton. But Monroe's pictures stole the scene at Bonhams Auction House, sending murmurs of anticipation around an auction room packed with bidders of all ages, including a Marilyn lookalike complete with scarlet lipstick and masses of dyed blonde hair. Most sold for well above the prices estimated by the auctioneers. The sale included the last photograph, taken of Monroe alive, just before she died of a drugs overdose, on Aug. 5, 1962.

Madonna 'does not owe' money to anyone

PARIS (AP) — Madonna, the recording world's pouting, cranky, blasé superstar, denied that she owes the French government back taxes from income she made in this country. "I don't owe